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In a letter preserved in the Bodleian
Alice's Adventures, writes as follows
 and Mrs. Gatty, I have too long
Elsie. unanswered. Not that I have an
 "Wilson" mystery. The editor,
 subject. I never heard of "Elsie's Ad-
 came out before or after "Alice": t

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kindly pointed out our mistake.

[REDACTED]

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om at Westminster'; he 'always found time, not only
ical researches of his own, but to promote, by every m
erary undertakings of others'. It was he who gave Ma
papers.

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of Dryden. The letter has this postscript: 'I en
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for some of your illustrations of Shakspear.' Unfortun
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f, bearing the watermark, is missing. The paper
from that of the 'Scrap'.

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ELSIE;
FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND,
ETC.



BY
J. CRAWFORD WILSON,
OR OF "JONATHAN OLDAKER," "GITANILLA," ETC.

LONDON:
EDWARD MOXON & CO., DOVER STREET.

1864.

280. f. 10.

LONDON :
RICHARD BARRETT, PRINTER,
MARK LANE.



TO THE
M E M O R Y

OF

J. T.

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

“ A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman
The spacious world cannot again afford.”

“ A fellow of infinite jest and most excellent fancy.”

“ A Man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.”

P R E F A C E.

FIELDING, in the First Chapter of his "Tom Jones," has compared an author to the keeper of a public ordinary, to which all persons are welcome for their money ; at which they may insist upon gratifying their palates if they can, or exercise their purchased privilege of grumbling and censuring, if they cannot.

Availing myself of the same metaphor, I would suggest that the Preface is to the Book, what the Bill of Fare is to the Ordinary.

To those who can always eat and digest what is set before them, the Bill of Fare is not a necessity ; but for others, who elevate the act of dining into an art, the Bill of Fare, like this Preface, must first of all be provided.

And so I submit it without apology, because, firstly, whoso reads it will not require any ; and, secondly, such labour would be lost in the case of those who adopt the other alternative.

A very limited edition of "ELSIE" was printed for private circulation in the August of 1852, under the title of "The Village Pearl," and dedicated by special permission to the late honoured and lamented Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd. Certain suggestions offered by him, after its issue from the press, have not been lost sight of; and the numerous corrections and excisions which have been made, warrant a change even in the name of the story. Noting these facts, the Author would fain chronicle—even upon so shifting a sand as the preface to a volume of poems—his humble tribute of esteem to the memory of the unselfish patron, whose large heart was ever open to sympathise with, and encourage, the honest labourer in the rugged fields of Literature; the remembrance of whose friendship must, in the breasts of all who knew him, be for ever green.

"Flights to Fairyland" are reprinted, with two exceptions, from the "Dublin University Magazine" of 1855, and now for the first time published in a collected form.

"The Occasional Pieces," their author hopes, may be judged, "not according to their deserts," but by the "dignity and honour" of the reader.

London, December, 1864.

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ELSIE.

—o—

BOOK THE FIRST.

—

"QUO SEMEL EST IMBUTA RECVS, SERVABIT ODORRM
TESTA DIU." HOR. EPIST. II.

—

How sweet the task, when day is almost done—
A summer's day—to view the setting sun ;
To rest on some green hillock and survey
The magic splendours of his cloudless way.
With dazzling disk of molten gold, he lies
Pendant in space— sole monarch of the skies.
There slowly sinking, bright the hues he spreads
Around the western mountains' rugged heads,
Bathing their summits in such heavenly glare,
That angel feet might tread unsullied there.
The gilded tree tops glitter in his beams,
And simple currents change to silvery streams.
Shadow, his sable servant, bears his train,
Leaving dark blots on the indented plain ;
Behind each substance, on the eastern side,—
By light unseen—his noiseless footsteps glide,

B

Hiding with spectral hand, and hoodwinked eye
One half creation 'neath a canopy
Which darkens twilight as soft zephyrs stir
Her veil of thin transparent gossamer ;
Then, as he sinks beneath the western height,
Smiling at eve, and bidding earth " Good night,"
Ere yet the beams, that tinge with lurid red
The gorgeous curtains which surround his bed,
Have in the distance faded from the scene,
The evening Star leads forth Night's sceptred Queen ;
High poised in air, upon her ebon throne,
She mildly claims our hemisphere her own—
Her chief insignia one pearly gem,
Centred amid her starry diadem.

How hush'd is Nature, how profoundly still ;
The sole insurgent is yon rippling rill,
That bound by straggling banks on either hand,
Wages a warfare on the pebbly strand :
With bubbles crested, and low plaintive cry,
Its pigmy billows roll unceasing by,
Distorting Nature's beauties, rich and rare,
As shattered mirrors might reflect the Fair.

Onward it flows, and in its course it blends
With streams, the tributes that each valley sends :
Still gathering weight, and dignity and power,
And calmer grown with each successive hour,
Till deeper waters bid its murmuring cease,
And petty discord yields to perfect peace.
E'en such is Life, upon Time's eddying stream,
Yet not a bubble, nor a fabled dream :
Life is Reality, and wends its way
As doth the stream, upon an April's day ;
A changeful day—a day of smiles and tears,
Of joys and sorrows, hopes, and trembling fears ;
Such compounds strange are to man's being given,
His earthen mould lit up with fire from heaven.
And what is Time? a fragment rent from space—
A speck in chaos Mind was formed to grace ;
A rich oasis fixed by Heaven's decree
Amid the deserts of Eternity.

Beside yon stream,—where branching elms arise,—
The mouldering ruin of a cottage lies ;
Around the scatter'd fragments widely spread,
The silvery lustre of the moon is shed,
As if to consecrate a lonely spot
By Heav'n remembered, though by man forgot.

Still aged seers, when memory recalls
The clambering woodbine that once deck'd its walls,
With heads uncovered, pause beneath the shade
In which that wreck is sombrely array'd,
Whilst bygone incidents crowd free and fast,
And force hot tears as tributes to the Past.

They tell a tale, when in the tattling vein—
As on their hearts some sweet bewitching strain
Is played by jocund Humour—of a day
When they were young, with spirits light and gay,
And looked on aged men with hoary hair,
Whose brows were furrowed with thick lines of
As children now in turn will stand and gaze [care,—
On their bent forms in wonder and amaze,
Asking their mothers, in untutored tongue,
“If such old men could ever have been young.”—
Of one, who dwelt where now those fragments lie
Almost unheeded by the passer-by:
Whose winsome movements cast a magic spell,
Like fabled Fairy's, round that lovely dell,
Yet in whose track, with footsteps sure and slow,
Misfortune passed, and her attendant, Woe;

Whilst iron Fate on wanton Ruin smiled,
As Death entombed fair Nature's loveliest child.

Thus runs the tale :—ere yet their raven hair
Was silvered o'er by sorrow, time, or care :
Ere human ills, with persecuting sway,
Had from their cheeks chased rosy health away,
A lovely cottage rose, in rustic pride,
Upon that babbling streamlet's verdant side.
The towering elms, that now in sadness wave
Their spreading branches o'er its tombless grave,
Were then but saplings, bent by every breeze,
And not as now—umbrageous, stately trees,
Whose giant trunks their leafy garlands rear
High o'er the spire that decks yon house of prayer.

A stagnant pool, with slimy leaves o'erspread,
Usurps the spot where once a garden shed
The fragrant perfumes of well-tended flowers ;
The box-bound path, the honeysuckled bowers,
The old slate dial, and the vine-clad wall,
The busy hive, the bending fruit trees—all
Have like the cottage crumbled to decay,
And passed from earth like sounds of yesterday.

One only relic has been spared by Fate,
And that lies broken—'tis the wicket gate
That in green livery, was placed as guard
Betwixt the garden and the old churchyard.
Yes! there it rests, unheeded in the dust,
Its once bright latch corroded o'er with rust,
Its hinges broken, and the paint which graced
Its smoothened bars in other days, defaced.
Mid loosened stones and thistles half entombed,
Though mouldering fast, it yet lies unconsumed.

Oft has it swung, as though in wild delight,
When sinless infant claimed baptismal rite;
Oft creaked with glee when orange blossoms vied
With clustering curls to deck the blushing bride:
Yea, moan'd in turn whene'er the pastor read
O'er life's fall'n tower the Service for the Dead—
That last sad prayer, breathed o'er the useless clod
Which held the breath of an omniscient God.
Ah! as the grave receives its sacred trust,
As sinks the empty casket—"dust to dust"—
What earthly sound so much the sense appals
As the loose clay that on the coffin falls?

Think on it, Ye ! o'er whom bright Fortune reigns,
Who deem the poor man's very touch profanes ;
Who fawn on all more potent ! and would hold
E'en Heaven in fief, could it be bought for gold,
Yea, from that Heaven expel, all those who die
Unknown to power, or galled by poverty.
A day will come, ye may not think of Pride,
Though o'er your dust a leper's bones abide ;
Nor frown on those, whose clownish feet may tread
In rustic sport above your silent bed ;
Nor spurn the worm that leaves its slimy trace
On what the world once called a comely face !—
Think on it well. The soft voluptuous eye,
The heart that bounds responsive to a sigh,
The lips that love pants ardently to press,
The voice that soothes with melting tenderness—
Each may be changed, within a short-lived day
To what men dread—from which they turn away,
Whilst on the brow Disdain once made his throne,
Corruption settles loathsomely and lone.
Ambition, Riches, Wealth,—all worldly power
Avails but little in Death's solemn hour ;
The clay-cold tenement, so cramped and small,
Is quite sufficient to contain them all.

Within that cottage when yon gate look'd gay,
The Village Pastor lived—he had, they say,
One lovely grandchild—oft in evening hours
They'd sport together 'mid Spring's loveliest flowers,
And he would laugh, and play, and share her joy,
And feel as though he were again a boy.
'Till shortened breath, and pains awakened, told
The grey-haired sage that he was weak and old.

She was an orphan, orphan'd at her birth,
As pure a blossom as e'er sprung from earth ;
No eye maternal watched that slumbering child,
Nor on her artless prattling fondly smiled ;
No kindred milk her infant wants supplied,
Her widowed mother brought her forth—and died.
Dismal and sad her entrance to our sphere,
Cradled, as 'twere, upon a parent's bier.
All thought the mother slumbered, but the breath
Had fled, and left the helpless babe with Death—
Alone with Death ; and yet it smiled on him
Less like a babe than Heav'n's pure cherubim.

On Time's rude stream, thus unattended thrown,
Almost unfriended, helpless, and alone ;

Beneath a neighbouring cottier's fostering care
The thriving infant daily grew more fair.
Endeared to all by Heaven engendered ties,
Each saw with hope the dawn of Reason rise,
Each felt an interest in her budding spring—
The name of Orphan is a sacred thing—
And through the country round that rosy girl
Was loved, admired, and called "The Village Pearl."

Upon the rich green grassy sward which lay
Between the cottage and the main highway,
At even's tide, would little Elsie play :
And as the rustics pass'd—their labours done—
Each would hold converse with the prattling one :
Not as with children, men are wont to speak,
But with a blush upon each swarthy cheek,
Respectful tones, and bashful downcast eyes,
As though they spake with one from Paradise.
And she would call them by their several names—
The village belles—the venerable dames,—
She knew them all—so oft had each been there,
To share the goodly Pastor's cheer, or prayer.

Oft when she'd scramble to her grandsire's knee,
And part his silvery locks in playful glee,
Singing the while in sweet untutored tone,
Such wordless songs as childhood makes its own :
The joyous carols of that stammering tongue,
Like silver bells o'er peaceful waters rung,
Would make the old man close the sacred tome,
And muse on one, whose solitary home
Was where the dew-kiss'd grass at sunrise waves—
As sport light zephyrs—o'er the lonely graves.

Oft when in fretful mood, or thinking vein,
Young Elsie strove untiringly to gain
His busied thoughts, the peevishness of age
Would sit in frowns upon his brow, and wage
A petty warfare, with the heart which strove
In loving all, to still find more to love ;
Then would he turn, and chide the startled child,
And she would weep, and fix on him her mild
Ethereal eyes ; in that confiding gaze
His soul would see a face of earlier days,
A spirit face oft seen through Faith, whene'er
His soul rose Heavenward on the wings of prayer.
All anger flown, his trembling hands outspread
A moment paused in blessings o'er her head—

Then chid no more, but cradled on his breast,
His was the task to lull her cares to rest ;
Around his neck her tender arms would twine
As to its sole supporter clings the Vine :
Against his breast her little heart would beat,
Seeking, as 'twere, a more secure retreat,
Whilst sobs to smiles, and tears to girlish glee
Exchanged, as Age caress'd pure Infancy.
Oh, blessed hours of Infancy ! ere Time
Has taught the mind to scan the page of Crime ;
When all around is as a blissful dream
Of smiling happiness ;—when every theme
Possesses novelty ;—not vernal flowers
More pure, more chaste, than childhood's happy hours.
Then Earth seems Paradise ; its utmost bound
The massive mountains that are piled around
The peaceful valley, raised by God on high,
As props on which Heav'n's concave canopy
Is reared aloft !—the soaring clouds that spread
Their thin and dusky particles o'erhead,
Seem wreaths of smoke that from rude cots arise
And pendant move between them and the skies.
Oh, blissful hours ! when other worlds career
Through darkened space around our earthly sphere

Lighting Night's ebon vault, the stars appear
To childhood's mind, as chinks through which are
Stray rays of beauties only seen in Heaven; [given,
Or torches held by angels, whilst the sun
Sleeps o'er the hills, his race of glory done;
When the pale moon, in every monthly change,
Appears a paradox, than all—more strange;
High poised in air, whilst clouds career below,
Like Hope, she shines, though dimm'd by dark'ning woe,
So Noah's ark with whelming waters strove,
And yon lone star seems his returning dove.

Weeks changed to months, and months stole years away,
Whilst Elsie grew more lovely, and less gay,—
Less like a child, and more like those we see
In happy dreams: her sweet simplicity,
Like Beauty's robe, arranged by tasteful Art,
Veiled her fair form—yet did not hide her heart,
Her virgin heart, untainted, pure, and good,
That priceless gem of opening womanhood.
Oh! she was fair and beautiful; her face
A living mirror of her soul; there grace

And maiden modesty, with truth, combined
In one sweet index of a guileless mind ;
Such was our mother, Eve, ere man was driven
From Eden's garden by insulted Heaven,
That glorious Heaven which happiest spirits share,
And such as Elsie are the angels there.

Old Time, whose heavy and unsparing hand,
Nor Wealth, nor Art, nor Beauty can withstand,
Paused, as he saw the Child assume the Maid,
And lent her clustering curls a darker shade,
Rounded her form, and bade Perfection's glow
Dance on her velvet cheek ;—the virgin snow
Less pure, less spotless than that guileless breast,
Where youth and innocence were lull'd to rest.

But where was he 'neath whose paternal care
"The Village Pearl" grew brighter ? did he share—
As once he did, the secrets of her soul ?
Or had the clambering vine o'ertopped the pole,
To which in infancy it fondly clung ?
Where was her aged grandsire ? had the tongue
From whose wise precepts her expanding mind
First learned to soar, grown silent or less kind ?

The hand that guided her, the eyes that shone,
In earlier days upon the prattling one,
Were they as then they were? Did love so pure,
So holy, so confiding, still endure?
Did those benignant smiles of goodness grace
His wrinkled brow and venerable face?
Or had invidious Time, by beauty charmed,
In decking youth, passed old age by unharmed,
Erasing lines that thought and sorrow make
As lasting landmarks, all for Elsie's sake.

Yes, still he lived. Time had been harsh with him;
His step was tottering and his sight more dim:
Around his neck long gathering years had cast
That cumbersome millstone of the shrouded past,
Whose leaden weight bends down the hoary head,
As though it sought a home where slept the dead.
His voice had lost the fullness of its tone,
And midst the wreck sad Memory reigned alone,—
A lonely monarch o'er a lonely state,
Where all was helpless, lorn, and desolate.

Yes, still he lived; but, ah! how great the change—
The ways of Providence are wise, and strange,

Past finding out ; in such a world as this
We drain life's bitter cup ; the cup of bliss
Is but a fantasy, its dregs are woe ;
The bliss we dream of, and that angels know,
Is the unseen hereafter ; the sole joy
Of earth is Change—that mingled with alloy.
Hence as men enter on the final stage,
That tottering rampart of the life, " old age,"
They learn, and only then, that not of earth
Is real happiness ; its place of birth
Seems more remote, more vague, that when at first
They grasped a bubble, only formed to burst ;—
In ardent youth they gave the shadow chase,
Through years they followed it, yet lost the race.
Sometimes when Mirth has gamboll'd lightly by,
Like rays of sunshine through a clouded sky,
They deemed the prize at hand : more eager grown,
They cast their snare, but found the phantom flown.
So children chase that wanderer of air,
The gaudy butterfly, so brilliant there—
Grasp the frail thing, so fair 'neath sunny skies,
But find, when captured, that its beauty dies.

Age bears a something that must needs affect
The thinking mind with pity and respect.
Pity that aught ethereal as the soul
Should writhe beneath mortality's controul ;
That the breathed spirit of Omniscience, given
To purge the essence of our dross, for Heaven,
'Neath time and sorrow dwindles to a span,
Making a Babe of what God made a Man ;
Respect for wrinkles which old Time's rough plough,
Despite of art, sinks deeply in the brow ;
For past experience, which can but be found
Where years, like milestones, mark the travell'd ground—
Ground which once passed can never be retrod,
Gives dust to dust, and yields the soul to God.

But there was one, when'er he sought to move,—
One living emblem of respect and love,—
Whose jealous care his slightest wants supplied,
And who was ever by that old man's side.
In shady evening's cool, refreshing hour
She'd lead him forth ; and 'neath the perfumed bower
Beguile the time, by reading from that page
Whose words give solace to declining age.

Thus lived they there : he was the world to her,
And she was all to him—his comforter,
His guardian, and his friend ; were she away,
His heart was heavy ; were she near, 'twas gay,—
Gay as a heart could be, whose every throb
Knock'd at the gates of death. What hand could rob
That crumbling ruin of the only tie
That made it sweet to live, and pain to die !

Another heart, had lately learn'd to share
With his a portion of her love and care.
One elder than herself, though in the prime
Of manly vigour—the rude hand of Time
Had set no signet on his brow—the fire
Of ardour burned in every vein. Desire
Leaped in his sparkling eye ; his step was light,
Yet firm ; his features play-grounds for delight.
His voice upon the ear, like music rung,
So rich its varied tones—less sweetly strung
The lover's lute, whose dulcet melody
When silence sleeps, bids Echo sing for glee.

A stranger there ! none reck'd from whence he came,
And Elsie only knew the youth by name.

c

In cities bred ; well versed in every art
That wins affection, plays upon the heart,
Dazzles the sense, and seldom fails to bind
In loves bright chains, the inexperienced mind ;
The burnish education lends mere words,
The happy charm society affords,
Combined with Nature's gifts—a faultless form,
A soul that seem'd magnanimous and warm ;
Each lent its aid to win that priceless gem,
The purest pearl in beauty's diadem.

And was he lov'd ? Oh ! ye who mete the heart
Of purity and innocence by art,
Who wear hypocrisy to shelter vice,
And sell affection at the highest price ;
Whose studied blush, and prudish prurient smile
Screens secret guilt—as does the placid Nile
The scaly and destructive crocodile—
Whose passion makes each votary its slave,
And blasts all flow'rs on virtue's early grave.
Ye cannot tell : to your distemper'd gaze,
Love's holy flame seems Passion's lustful blaze ;
Its name in fading echo lives alone—
A mournful echo, an expiring groan,

A dismal knell that ever haunts the ear,
And whispers, "happiness lies buried here." [sold,
How can ye judge?—where hearts are bought and
Love kicks the beam, outweighed by sordid Gold;
Gold is your alcahest, the potent spell
That tests all worth—the heart its crucible.

Yes, he was lov'd by her; her love was pure
As Heaven's own breath; not silent and demure,
But all confiding; every artless look
An open page in Nature's loveliest book,
She never blush'd! Blushes are veils which Shame
Draws over startled modesty. The name
Of guilt and sin was only known to her
As it is known to angels; and the blur
Stamp'd on the foreheads of the base by crime,
Her simple mind ascrib'd alone to Time.
Oh! blissful ignorance, that look'd on man
As God had formed him first, ere earth began
To nurture weeds, whose influence destroys
Her fairest buds, and poisons all her joys.

At length that day to which young hearts aspire,
The wedding-day arriv'd. The old grandsire

Seem'd younger by some years. The blooming bride
Struggled with tears she could not—would not hide.
She strove to smile, she wish'd to be more gay,
But then the tears would wash the smiles away.
In simple unpretending white array'd,
She seem'd some wandering cherub that had stray'd
From Heaven's bright crystal halls! whose place of
Was purer, holier, happier than our earth, [birth
Or like the angel, that with veiled eyes,
Wept as our parents quitted Paradise.

They cross'd the garden—pass'd the wicket gate,
Whilst joy-bells rung their merry peals. Elate,
The rustics welcomed them. The pastor wept,
And paused beside the lonely grave where slept
The mother of the bride. In every eye
A tear-drop rose; from every breast, a sigh
Burst sadly forth. She too had walked that way,
Clad in white garments on her bridal-day;
And those who saw her said, that Elsie there,
Their "Village Pearl," was not a whit more fair
They pass'd her resting-place, and gained the porch,
The simple entrance to the village church;
And as they cross'd it, those rude hearts essay'd
To breathe a blessing; and the elders pray'd

That Elsie's lot might be less stern and hard
Than hers, who slumbered in that old churchyard.

Though years had pass'd, since 'neath that holy fane
The pastor's voice was heard, yet once again,
In surplice clad, as in the days of yore,
He read that service oftentimes read before.
His trembling tones by strong emotion press'd,
An echo found in every listener's breast;
The gushing tears that would not be controll'd
His furrow'd cheeks impeded. Still they roll'd
In briny drops upon the sacred page,
And left their signets for an after age.

It was a scene of sadness— not of bliss,
And when those two were one, the nuptial kiss
Press'd on the bride's white brow, was chill as death;
The bridegroom's cheek was pale, he gasped for breath.
She shudder'd at his touch! but then the Wife
Burst through the Maid—he was her other life,
Her hope, her guide, her counsellor, her friend,
Her fellow-pilgrim to her journey's end;
She clasped his hand—implored him to be gay,
And as she smiled, his weakness pass'd away.

Thus stood they there, half-way on Life's rough road
Betwixt the cradle, and that cold abode,
Where sorrow sleeps in peace—where pomp and pride
With Death and dust lie calmly side by side—
Where wealth avails not—where distinction ends—
Where foes with foes, are mild as friends with friends,
And where the peer has no advantage o'er
The squalid wretch that shivered at his door.

They led the pastor home. The sacred rite
Had been performed, and every soul was light.
Young Love was blithe—Mirth's joyous laughter loud;
Their souls no longer were behind a cloud,
But all was bright as noonday. Hope was there
With Fancy, building castles in the air;
And Concord played sweet strains of melody
Upon their heart strings. Time fled rapidly
Chased by Delight, till Midnight's sable plume
Nodded o'er slumb'ring lids in silent gloom.

Days seem'd but hours, so fleetly did they pass—
'Tis ever thus with Youth—Time's tell-tale glass
For it seems turned too slowly. Youth but knows
The side where Summer sits; the chilling snows

Of wintry age are strangers—it would mingle
The future with the present; yet no single
Thought of declining years should dim the view,
All must be sunshine still—all bright—all new.
Vain dreamer Youth! those hours whose leaden feet
Ye chide for seeming tardiness, are fleet
And overtake Old Age! Ah, then the tide
Of ardent hope is changed! on every side
Death strikes at such as ye! the eye will fear
To glance beyond the present! dark and drear
The prospect of the future—every tomb
Will whisper sadly, “We can make thee room.”
The heart will shrink, as chimes each funeral bell,
For its own depths re-echo every knell.
Those in the windows then shall cease to see;
The light grasshopper shall a burthen be;
The broken wheel beside the cistern cast,
With life’s loosed silver cord must lie at last.
The Sun alone unchanged shall brightly glow,
Gilding this epitaph, “Dust lies below.”

Then homes grew dearer. Village firesides held
Their happy courts—from thence dull Form expelled,
Rode naked on the blast, till Fashion lent
The shivering wretch her robe—smiling Content

Gave ear to simple tales—unmingled joy
Cozened old Care—that mischief-working boy,
Unblushing Cupid, winged his love tipp'd darts
With gentle sighs, and at untutored hearts
Sped them from sparkling eyes—secure his aim,
Congenial spirits felt that sacred flame,
Which by a touch augmented—nay a tone,
Blends two harmonious souls for life in one.—
Ah, sweet fireside! where rapture and delight
With magic charms illumine the dreary night;
Where Youth's prolific garden teems with flowers,
Rarer than ever bloom'd in Eden's bowers,
And Age throws off Care's ever lengthening chain,
To live its youth in retrospect again,

The cottage had its fireside also; there
Sat the good pastor in his old arm-chair,
Wrapt in deep thought; whilst Elsie by his side
The flying thread with skilful fingers plied.
Pensive she seem'd and pale;—there hung a weight
Of care around her heart. Arthur of late
Had in the city made a longer stay
Than was his wont. A week had stol'n away,
Since last he left her, and—she knew not why—
Whene'er she strove to smile, a tyrant sigh

Would fright the dancing dimples from her face,
And leave a tear perchance to mark the place.
If in her hours of loneliness she sung,
Her heavy heart would paralyze her tongue;
Make ardent Hope the gyves of Fear confess,
And drown her warblings in forgetfulness.

Another week on lagging wheels roll'd past,
And each dull hour seem'd longer than the last;
Longer and sadder—such the freaks that Fate
Delights to practice on the desolate.
She never murmured, but her fading cheek
Told tales of fears, her tongue disdained to speak,
Whilst swollen eyes gave earnest proof that she
Had sat in Sorrow's lone society.

But 'twas at night,—when, pillow'd on the breast
Of soothing sleep, her grandsire lay at rest—
In her own chamber's solitude, her soul
Loosened its pent-up floods; then tears would roll
Unfetter'd from those orbs, whose mellow light
Like stars 'mid show'rs, shone sparkling, though less
Whilst the dull lamp shed Hope's expiring ray [bright,
Around the couch where Disappointment lay.

His absence were less painful, could she prove,
That still he thought of her. But constant love
Grows soonest jealous; and a careless tone
The idol utter'd—when the heart is lone—
Preys on the mind in midnight's silent gloom,
Like greedy vulture o'er some outraged tomb.

Strange he was silent too,—had he but sent
One short epistle, it had brought content.
Had he but known what charms mere words impart
When Love indites them, to a constant heart;
What days of loneliness a letter cheers,
Caressing hope, and lulling jealous fears—
She must have heard from him,—for lovely woman
Though half an angel, is by nature human,
And doubts will rise where apathy is shown,
For love, like childhood, cannot rest—alone.

Ere he had left her—was it fantasy?
No! no! 'twas bitter truth:—she deem'd that he
Was more reserved;—his hours had all been given
To gloomy thoughts; his temper was uneven:
A tender word from her had failed to break
The spell that chain'd him; still for his dear sake

She'd wear a smile, and press upon his brow
Those lips so ruddy then, so pallid now.
Then would he rise in eagerness, and chide
With hasty speech his all-devoted bride,
As though that kiss, whose touch could not profane
A cherub's cheek, had set the brand of Cain
Upon his lofty forehead. Did she seek
To learn the cause of anger—o'er his cheek,
The hues of death would spread; his trembling frame
Shake, as though palsy had withheld his claim
But for a space; his starting eyeballs glare,
As though earth's ills had found their focus there:
Thick perspiration from his features burst;
His teeth gnash wildly, as if fiends accurst
Tugged at his soul. But when the fit had past,
And Elsie's arms around his neck were cast,
His breath with hers would blend in unison,
As though their happy hours had but begun.
Weaken'd and sad, upon her faithful breast,
His racking head would droop in search of rest,
Till slumber seal'd his eyes. Yet, still 'twas strange
She inly thought,—Had she produced that change?
Why should her questions wake such fiendish rage?
Why should her voice in turn that storm assuage?

Wild, too, his looks, till charm'd by smiles away,
When first he kiss'd her on their wedding-day.

Such thoughts were her companions, night by night,
In tedious hours, when sleep and peace invite,
The drowsy world to lay its limbs at ease,
Whilst nature brightens all their energies.
But o'er her couch no roses had been strown,
Or if they had—their thorns remain'd alone :
Remain'd, whilst restless Thought fled hurrying by,
Like clouds careering 'neath an angry sky,
Which shed o'er fertile plains such sullen shade,
That sunshine sickens in the gloom they've made.

'Twas thus with Elsie ! by her restless bed
When Silence kept his watch ! the hydra head
Of dreary Vigil scowled. Should slumbers creep,
And seal her weary eyes in gentle sleep,
Distemper'd dreams would gambol through her brain,
And fitful Fancy, with her spectral train,
Harass her burthen'd mind. Each sudden start
Show'd Hope and Fear at variance in her heart ;
Each word—half utter'd—at its birth expir'd
In murm'ring cadence—till by Frenzy fir'd,

Her heaving breast would scare repose away,
Whilst languor darken'd the approach of day.

Oh, virtuous woman ! Nature's paragon :
Purest of gems that glow beneath our sun,
And ornament dull earth : though art the goal
Of bliss terrestrial. Man's lofty soul
May scale Ambition's tow'r, but all is bleak,
Unless thy fragrant breath perfume his cheek.
What,—lacking thee—were all his pomp and power ?
Man is the Tree—but woman is the Flower,—
The fragile Flower, that ornaments the Tree
When both are blent in sacred unity.
Oh, constant woman ! though thy smiles impart
In sunniest hours fresh raptures to the heart ;
Though music breathes in every tone of thine,
And every glance of feeling is divine
When fortune smiles we cannot judge of thee,
Thy only test, is stern adversity.

Man vaunts his love, and calls thee changeable.
'Tis false—with thee all true affections dwell.
He, like the vane, revolves with every breeze,
Ensnared by each new beauty that he sees :

Skips like the wanton bee from rose to rose,
Sipping all sweets the loveliest flow'rs disclose;
Too often stamping on a spotless name,
The brand indelible of burning shame,
Whilst fading blossoms blighted by his breath,
Their dewy features hide in silent death.
Such deeds, oh, MAN! are thine: the hectic flush
Of guilt, enshrouding virtue's modest blush,
Had ne'er been but for THEE. Ghastly its glow,
For broken hearts lie festering below.
The hollow laugh—that echo from the grave—
Once rose like music o'er the sleeping wave;
The glassy eye, the wild unearthly shriek,
The wasting frame, the sunk and pallid cheek,
These are thy handiwork. Yet darest thou say
That woman's love is frail as April's day?
Deem ye her heart is but a worthless toy,
To sport and tamper with, perchance destroy,—
A senseless block, a puppet form'd to please
Your lordly lusts in pamper'd hours of ease?
Go! go! ye know her not! her constant soul,
True as the needle to the northern pole,
Nor time, nor tyrant circumstance can sever,
She loves but once—yet trusts and loves for ever.

Still by the fireside stood one vacant chair,
Unused, for Arthur sat no longer there.
Lonely it seem'd, a sad memento left
By Fate to harras one of joys bereft ;
And yet the reft one priz'd it ; it would raise
Sad recollections of less lonely days ;
On it for hours her languid eyes would rest,
Until the vacuum, by Fancy dress'd,
Assumed her husband's form. But then a sound
Would break the mystic spell, and once unwound,
Her sinking heart, by dismal clouds o'ercast,
Would ponder helplessly upon the past ;
Or, like a wreck lash'd by an angry sea,
Toss on the waves of restless memory.

On his swift passage to death's narrow bed,
Nought cheer'd the old man's soul. He hourly read
Upon the page of Elsie's brow, the tale
Expiring Hope relates. So fair, so pale,
So beautiful withal, and still to him
One of heaven's minist'ring cherubim ;
Yet could he see that at her root of life
The foe of nature delved ; his vengeful knife
Had hack'd the blossom's from her cheek, and shed
Her smiles like flowers that fade above the dead.

And they must part at last: he from the dove
His age had nurtur'd with paternal love,
Whose gentle music lull'd his soul to rest,
When fortune favour'd, or when care oppress'd.
She, from the tutor of her earlier years,
Whose lips had kiss'd away the infant's tears;
Whose hand had led her o'er the grassy sod;
Whose tongue had taught the lisping babe of God.
Yes, they must part,—her other self away;
Night had no balm for her, no charms the day;
Hope's smiles, which buoyed her in her virgin spring,
Were hid of late behind his trembling wing;
The veil of mystery that hemm'd her round,
Became each day more murky and profound:
"The Village Pearl's" pure glow was rarely seen,
The mortal touch of man had dimmed its sheen.

Upon her knees she silently implored
Her grandsire's benediction. Not a word
That day had pass'd their lips. When hearts o'erflow
With the extremes of happiness or woe,
Strong feeling ties the tongue, and language dies,
Whilst souls converse through medium of the eyes.
Upon her head his trembling hands were laid
In holy benison; his lips essay'd

To breathe the prayer ; yet though no sounds were given,
Such aspirations wing their way to Heaven.
With hoary locks thrown back, and eyes uprais'd,—
Like Israel's priest, when on the altar blaz'd
The sacrificial lamb—supernal light
Of glory deck'd his brow, as though that sight,
Which age and time had dimm'd, had power to see
His blessing ratified by Deity.
Slow by her side he knelt; her arms were cast
Around his neck ; the Present and the Past
Embracing and embraced. He fondly strained
The loved one to his breast ; one hope remained,
One glorious hope, cementing earthly love,
The hope of meeting in a world above.
A holy kiss upon her brow he press'd,
That solemn seal assured her she was blessed.
Slowly she rose ; his venerable face
Bowed meekly to the ground,—she left the place,
To seek amid the city's darkling maze,
The partner of her heart in happier days.
The pastor raised his head—he called her name,
“Elsie ! dear Elsie !” yet no answer came.
Wildly he called, by viewless echo's spread,
That name was choruss'd o'er the slumbering dead.

The old church walls delighted to prolong
Those fading tones in soft and shadowy song,
But still she came not—she whose life pass'd o'er,
Anticipating wishes ere they wore
The sounding garb of speech. He felt bereft
Of the sole comfort time and age had left
His widow'd heart. Though short might be her stay,
He knew he only lived from day to day.
Life's flickering flame each hour more feebly burn'd,
And soon the useless lamp must be o'erturn'd.
His spirit sank within him : who should cheer
His soul in passing from this earthly sphere,
To that bright heaven he look'd for ? where those eyes
He hoped should light his path to Paradise ?
“Elsie !” he cried, “Dear Elsie, where art thou ?
This heart ne'er felt its helpless lot till now ;
It never lack'd thy angel eloquence
Till now to sooth its fleetly fading sense ;
And hast thou left me in my age alone ?
God shield thee, child ! His righteous will be done.”

END OF BOOK THE FIRST.

ELSIE.

BOOK THE SECOND.

"QUI SINE PECCATO EST VESTRUM, PRIMUS IN ILLAM LAPIDEM MITTAT."

FAREWELL! ye lovely vales, ye peaceful dells,
Ye fragrant meads where Contemplation dwells;
Ye murm'ring streams, ye mountains lone and gray,
Ye sylvan shades where sporting zephyrs play;
Summer has left ye to your hapless fate,
Autumn has pass'd, and ye are desolate.
Repulsive Winter, in his dreary shroud,
Howls in the tempest, and from cloud to cloud
Rolls on his thund'ring car. His lightnings glance
In wild coruscant fury through expanse,
With torrents warring,—as though Hell had striven
To storm the golden walls encircling Heaven.

Ye vales and dells, how bleak ye are, how wild !
Ye meads so fragrant, when kind Summer smil'd,
Where is your beauty now ? Ye murm'ring streams,
No longer silvered by pale Cynthia's beams,
But lock'd in icy bands, or drown'd in floods,
Ye sylvan shades, where now your perfumed buds ?
Where soothing zephyr ? whose melodious voice
Bade feathery tribes in fellowship rejoice !
Ye mountains lone, on whose majestic heads
The gorgeous sun in glittering splendour treads
When Spring salutes the world ! o'er which are cast
In summer's eve, his golden glories last ;
Why are your heads by vapoury mists defaced ?
Why have the snows your dauntless breasts encased
In frozen armour ? Do ye mourn for earth,
Or the past ages Time has brought to birth ?
Or for the " Pearl " that graced yon lovely dell ?
Ye mountain streams, and sylvan shades, farewell !

But where was Elsie ? Where quaint spires arise
In pigmy grandeur, tap'ring towards the skies ;
Where lofty domes their convex forms uprear ;
Where organs peal within the house of prayer ;

Where trophied columns brave the scythe of Time ;
Where Art, the favored child of every clime,
Pays homage meet to aught that is sublime ;
Where friendly Commerce with huge wings unfurl'd,
Gleans ere she flies, instruction for the world ;
Where Vice and Virtue break the sacred bread ;
Where lying monuments insult the dead ;
Where Wealth can look on Poverty, and close
Its purse,—and heart—if such it have—to woes
That drag a luckless brother to the tomb,
Though both had twinn'd within one mother's womb.
Oh ! hideous mockery ! and yet God's sun
Resplendent gilds that modern Babylon,—
Flings his bright beams o'er Heaven insulting spires,
To light the cell where misery expires ;
Whilst the same rays that dance round kingly thrones,
May kiss the pauper—starving on the stones.

The day had pass'd ; in hazy lustre shone
The city's myriad lamps. Still hurrying on,
The flood of Life—despite the chilling air
Harsh winter blows—flow'd ceaseless everywhere.
In crested chariot loll'd the pet of Fame,
The haughty noble, or the titled dame,

The envied heiress—each to seek delight
In wild debauch, or halls where beauty bright
Robs Day of hours to squander with the Night.
In humbler guise the wearied artizan,
Sped from his toil, to spend with fellow man,
In social converse or in drunken brawl,
The time when sleep should seal the eyes of all.
And last, those faded remnants of excess,
The debauchee ;—the maid whose loveliness
Had with her virtue fled, and given to crime
And lustful panders, woman's golden prime;
A frame polluted, yet adorned by art,
A fellow-creature reft of hope and heart :
Each past regardless of the cold his way—
The proud, the humble, the opprest, the gay,
The rich, the poor, the feeble, and the strong,
Swelling the city's streets with motley throng.

The tide of Life flow'd on, our earth its source,
The grave its destiny ; in its swift course
It bore "The Village Pearl." A week had made
Sad havoc in her charms. The brightest fade,
But seldom fade so swiftly. Woman's heart,
In trust surpasses man's ; has less of art,

And more of heaven. It is a fragile thing,
Weaker, yet stronger ; never wandering,
But constant until death ; weaker in fear,
Stronger in love ; in anger less severe,
And more forgiving—yet one harsh word spoken,
The silver cord that binds it, oft has broken.
Deceit or coldness with a giant's strength
Rives it in sunder—till the wreck at length
Of all that was so lovely and so fair,
Sinks in the whelming vortex of despair.

Seven days—seven sullied pages in the tome
Of Destiny—since Elsie left her home,
Had been turned o'er by Time. As each day roll'd
Into forgetfulness, like tales long told,
It left her wandering still. She took no rest,
Dismal forebodings on her senses prest,
Usurping Nature's sway. Her search had proved
A fruitless one ; the man her soul so loved
Had played her false ; his very name unknown
Within the house he told her was his own.

Bewildered and amazed she wandered thence,
But where she reck'd not. Harrowing suspense

Mocked her no more. The world had lost its charms,
Life its delights, and Death his stern alarms.
She sank upon the ground—so palsied Care
Droops 'neath the snake-wreathed fetters of Despair—
And craved that chilly bed where earthly woes
With broken hearts lie down in calm repose.

She felt her desolation—souls have sight
Where eyes are valueless, and lack the light
That panders to their sense. The soul can read
A language of its own in every deed,
A language hid from vision: and can hear
Exquisite sounds too fine for mortal ear,
And feel—as Elsie felt—deserted there,
Bearing the sacred burthen women bear,
Ere Nature calls them Mothers; drained by grief,
The fount of feeling lent her no relief—
E'en the relief of tears. The gathering crowd
Look'd coldly on the scene: a female bow'd
To earth by circumstance, or guilt, for them
Possess'd no novelty—thus men condemn
Poor hapless souls unheard. Some pass'd their way
And moralized on evils of the day;
Some pitied her estate, yet railed at Time
For lending life to such a "child of crime."

Her own soft sex, though far less chaste than she,
Swept on, and wondered that such things could be.
Regardless of the cause, each left the place,
Ranking pure Elsie with the vile and base.

Oh ! Nature, sink in darkness ! hide thy head
Behind a cloud of shame ! Religion—spread
Coarse sackcloth round thy loins, and gnaw the dust,
Let Charity yield up her sacred trust,
For Earth has lost her judgment. Virtue seems
As vice—vice, virtue. Life has two extremes,
And only two—the moral and the vile !
The moral bask 'neath fortune's sunny smile,
And such are called the Just. The vile are those
Who live with poverty—lie down with woes ;
Who starve where famine feasts. Whene'er they die,
No sculptured urns attest that " Here they lie."
Yet Heaven's pale primroses and daisies bloom
Above their graves, and scorn the trophied tomb.

At length, fair Elsie's head was raised by one
Of Sin's frail daughters ; though the charm was gone
Which virtue lends to loveliness—some part
Of the lost angel lingered near that heart

Once pure and innocent. She dared to speak
Of comfort, whilst upon her own wan cheek
The sickly lily pined. "The Village Pearl"
Lay on the bosom of that guilty girl, [the spring,
Whose eyes were dimm'd with tears. Though foul
Those tears were pure as dew the angel's wing
Brushes from Nature's face at morning's tide :
Poor Elsie bless'd her—she could nought beside,
Save pray for her—for her whose impious knee
Ne'er bow'd to Heav'n since leagued with infamy.

The tide of Life flowed on—and as it past,
Swift to her feet fair Elsie sprang aghast :
Flung back the clustering ringlets that array'd
Her pallid brow in sweet, though sombre shade.
With quivering lips—wild eyes, and heaving breast,
Where fear and wonder stood alike confest,
And arms distent—the name of "Arthur" hung
Half hush'd half uttered, on her parched tongue.
One effort yet—"Arthur," she shrieked, "'tis I,
"Tis Elsie calls thee!" but a bursting sigh
Shackled her speech, as o'er the pavement roll'd
A chariot deck'd with arms of burnish'd gold.

She saw him but a moment, and no more,
As swept that chariot by. Its panels bore
Heraldic crests—and seated by his side,
A lovely creature, with fond glance of pride
Feasted her eyes on him, as through the air
Careered that shriek of horror and despair.

Oh ! God, the shock was great ! the mental chain
Seem'd to have tangled in her bursting brain,
And every thought confused ! her look was wild ;
She could not weep, but playfully she smiled ;
And yet that smile was not the curve of mirth,
'Twas linked with laughter foreign to our earth.
She talk'd to forms unseen ! the piercing air
Chill'd not her breast—a flame was raging there.
The pestilential breath of fever swept
Through heart and brain—the blood no longer crept
In measured pulses through her veins, but sped
Like Molten lava, or those winds which spread
Their blasting influence o'er arid plains,
Where woo'd by burning sands the Simoom reigns.

Weeks pass'd away ; and consciousness returned
To her who sought it not. The tyrant spurned

A willing victim.—Death resigned his claim ;
And baffled fever, burned in his own flame
Fled to his native hell.—Hear it, Ye Meek !
And let Shame stamp her blur on every cheek ;
Hear it, Ye Just ! nor lift your eyes to Heaven,
In idle prayers that such may be forgiven ;
BUT GO AND LIKEWISE ACT ! That child of sin,
That girl abandoned, took the wanderer in ;
Pillow'd by day the sufferer's aching head
Upon her breast, gave her by night her bed !
Watched by her side, and wept—ah ! bitter tears,
For she had been like her in earlier years ;
Had loved—and from Love's golden paradise
Had fallen, as fell the angels from the skies.

Elsie had loved her, ere returning mind
Had lit her lustrous eyes—so good, so kind,
So gentle, so enduring—day by day
She watch'd that couch, where restless frenzy lay,
And tended every want : e'en madness sees
The gaze of friends 'mid crowding fantasies,
And so it was with Elsie ! when the sway
Of reason dawned again, she oft would say,

"That mid the fever's heat, there glow'd above
Twin-stars suffused with dew—twin-stars of love :"
And those were Mary's eyes. She knew they kept
A ceaseless watch, and never, never slept,
But call'd on her to live—to live and blend
Her guiltless tears with her repentent friend ;
To intercede for her, and waft her sighs
Upon her prayers, like incense through the skies,
"Till the avenging angel pass'd her door,
And Mercy whispered "GO, AND SIN NO MORE."

Nor had she sinn'd of late ; her food had ceased
To be the price of crime. But wants increased
As means to stay them failed. A broken chair
Its absent fellows mourned—the walls were bare
And comfortless—the sufferer's couch alone
Survived the wreck—each ornament was gone
That deck'd her simple home ; and one by one
Her very garments were exchanged for bread,
Yet Elsie knew it not. Beside her bed
The Magdalene knelt down, and dared to pray,
"That should temptation lead her feet astray,
That sin might be forgiven"—her face was bow'd
Between her wasted hands ; she sobbed aloud

In bitterness of soul. Two paths remained,
And for each path a guide,—The one crime-stain'd ;
The other good and pure ! Virtue was there,
But by her side scowled Hunger and Despair,
Twin-murderers of Hope—Vice whispered, “ Food,”
And pointed to the slumberer—her lewd,
Polluted laugh, in hideous discord rung,
“ Grow pure and starve ! ” the mocking demon sung ;
“ Grow pure and starve ! ” the cheerless room replied ;
“ Grow pure and starve ! ” the viewless echoes sigh'd ;
Her tortured spirit could rebel no more,
She rose, and tottered to the chamber door.
Her hand was on the latch—the slumberer woke !
But was it Elsie or an angel spoke ?
“ Mary ! ” the sound, through painful silence borne,
Like balsam kiss'd her soul. The smile of morn,
When hooded night shrinks from the weeping dell,
Less potent in its charm—she turned, and fell
Upon that breast of spotless purity,
Sobbing, “ Just heaven, there may be hope for me.”

And there in that chill room, she told a tale,
Alas ! too often told. Haggard and pale

As corse exhumed—to which was given the power
Of summing life's worst ills, in one short hour,—
She sat and spoke. And Elsie lent her ears
To that repentant sinner, whose warm tears
Glisten'd amid the darkness of the room,
As shines the glowworm 'mid surrounding gloom.
Seduced,—abandoned,—when her hopes were young ;
Robb'd of life's gem—the useless casket flung
To starve, or sin, into the gulf where Time
Sweeps the Forsaken with the Old in Crime ;
Where no kind hand in mercy seeks to save
The sinking soul, from guilt's eternal grave ;
From whence no maze, though e'er so tangled, lends
A clue to guide the wretch to early friends ;
But all is foul, polluted, and obscure,
Where Vice presides triumphant and secure.

Hers was a bitter tale ; as day by day
Faded the sense of shame, and Virtue's ray
In distance beam'd its last. Then sordid pelf
Gilded her dreams, and bought her from herself,
'Till sin required no veil—it knew no blush—
And proffered gold sufficed alone to crush

The dying cherub Modesty. But yet
The angel lingered ! she could not forget
Amid her lawless revels, hours of bliss,
When on her guileless lips a mother's kiss
In holy love was press'd. A father's smile
Haunted her calmer thoughts :—yet now so vile,
So ruined, and so lost ! a blot of shame
On nature's brow, disgracing woman's name !—
Oh ! could she but return to them once more,
Though through the fire her path, she'd wade it o'er,
Toil, beg !—but no !—alas !—the pale was past ;
Twixt her and Hope there lay a void so vast,
That Heav'n and Hell were nearer. Every eye
Scowled darkly on her as it pass'd her by ;
And e'en her childhood's playmates turned to flee
As though she bore the Plague or Leprosy.

Then would she weep, until the taunting sneers
Of others, deeper sunk, would mock her ears ;
Whose squalid hands embraced the foaming bowl
That cripples health, and helps to damn the soul.
She too must share their pledge, although her heart
Revolted at the deed ; but cast apart
From chaste society, and blent with them,
She feared to murmur,—dared not to condemn,

'Till headlong hurried by the lash of fate,
Each sin engendering sin, she learned of late
To share their midnight orgies, and deride
The feeling first she cherish'd—modest pride.

And thus she lived, till in her path she found
The drooping Elsie, fainting on the ground,
Like statue carved of injured innocence;
No christian hand outstretched to guide her thence.
Oh! then the woman warm'd within her breast,
And gentle Pity deigned to be her guest.—
A secret something whispered "She is pure,
Save her from guilt, let not its gauds allure
That sinless soul to death,—bear her away,
A mightier power hereafter will repay
Thy soul for Charity." And from that hour
She watch'd with jealous care that stricken flower,
Through tedious weeks, as though her hopes of Heav'n
Were all in her. Yet could she be forgiv'n?
She felt she could—e'en the infected air
Seem'd purer then—an angel lingered there,
Whose simple blessing when she raised her first,
Shed balsam o'er her soul; although accurst,

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That curse was lighter far ; and when she raised
The sufferer's burning head, she knew she gazed
On one, whose prayers were holy as the song
Which choiring seraphim for aye prolong !
Prayers that, in hovering round God's sacred throne,
Must draw on her a heavenly benison.

She dared not sin with Elsie by her side,
And thus her store was bartered to provide
Each comfort for her friend. She told her all !
E'en the temptation to renew her fall,
And of her impious prayer. God help the poor
Abandoned ones ! oft driven to endure,
Crimes loathsome to themselves, to bribe the foe
Of nature—Hunger—to withhold his blow !
God help them !—**MAN WILL NOT !**—Poor Mary's heart
Throbb'd wildly in her breast. Gladly she'd part,
E'en with her life, to make that chamber gay
Where all she loved so fondly, helpless lay.

Chilly that room, and dark ; without, the blast
Of winter howled malignant ; as it past,
It spread a snowy mantle o'er the ground,
And pendant set its icicles around,

Stamping the waters with a crystal seal !
Whilst o'er the sleeping city, peal on peal
Of thunder loudly boomed. The lightning's glare
That chamber lit a space ! and twining there
In mutual bereavement, wept and pray'd
Those sisters in adversity ; array'd
In sorrow's guise, like pale, dew-spangled flowers,
Or marble statues, touched by partial showers.
And when pale Morning oped her sickly charms,
She kiss'd them, slumbering in each other's arms.

Still on the current flow'd—and days began
To lengthen their existence, span by span.
The pregnant landscapes started into life ;
The lowly shrubs, the stately trees, were rife
With teeming embryo. Upon the wing
Birds once again blithe welcome sang to Spring,
And Nature seem'd in infancy.—What though
The eyes of morning wept, and the bright glow
Of the red sun at times through mist was seen,
Yet were rude tempests caged—pure and serene
The atmosphere, unclouded the blue sky ;
All things seem'd formed to live—and none to die ;

Whilst like a sparkling ball through space profound,
Our earth 'mid flaming worlds sped round and round,
Still bless'd with virtue, still debased by crime,
The charnel-house of Death—the toy of Time.

The old man lived in solitude, apart
From all the outer world; his sinking heart
Pined for the absent one! She was to him,
What to the miser is his gold! his dim
And fading eyes would ponder on the page
Her trembling hand had traced! Oh, tyrant age,
But for thy palsied grasp, no earthly power
Should hold his Elsie from his breast an hour!
Yet though that comfort was denied, 'twas bliss
To hear from her betimes—to read and kiss
The missives sent by her—to know he shared
A portion of her love!—love unimpaired,
E'en by misfortune's blow—love undefiled,
As when she sported there, an artless child!
Hung round his neck, and prattled in his ear,
A language unadorned, heartfelt, sincere.

All things seem'd lacking her; the cottage door
As in its former Spring, was garnish'd o'er

With clambering woodbine ; but no longer trained
To weave in graceful wreathes, it daily waned ;
Its youthful tendrils lack'd a fosterer's care,
And seem'd to mourn that Elsie was not there.
The garden smiled no more ; weeds sprang apace
And with despotic sway, usurped the place
Of fragrant Jassamine. The favoured spot,
Where the Sweet William, the Forget-me-Not,
The varied Tulip, and luxuriant Rose,
Used each in turn its fragrant sweets disclose,
Was overrun with weeds, and seem'd to say,
"It could not bloom whilst Elsie was away."

At last that cottage lost its only guest,
The good old pastor ; for within his breast
A heart of love yearned fondly for his child.
He could not live without her. Hope beguiled
His tottering limbs to brave the weary road,
And lure the wanderer to his own abode ;
Feast on her altered form his longing eye,
Then lay his head upon her breast—and die.

Why had she not returned ? did she forego
A rural home for the vain pomp and show

That noisy cities boast ! Where were the ties
In which the holy germ of kindred lies ?
Had they been crush'd or rent ? Could aught dis sever
Links that should last through life, yea last for ever,
When souls are re-united, where at rest
Earth's weary pilgrims harbour with the blest ?
Why was the old man lone ? There was a cause,
And that was Sympathy, which mildly draws
And binds congenial souls. 'Tis wise to play
The Good Samaritan. Poor Mary lay
On the same couch, where Elsie's fevered frame
Had writhed before—a more malignant flame
Raged in her veins—her paroxysms were wild
And terrible !—polluted and defiled,
Had been life's holiday with her : alive
To dead events alone, her mind would strive
In calmer moments, when each fit had past
To scare the Ghost of memory, and cast
Her hopes were Elsie pointed, at the feet
Of Him who fill'd Heav'n's boundless mercy-seat.
But Conscience held a mirror grimed with sin,
Foul as the nauseous charnel vault, within
Whose subterranean womb putrescence feeds,
In loathsome horror on the life it breeds.

It was a trying task—as phantoms sped
In grim confusion round the sufferer's bed ;
For one so weak, unaided and alone,
To hear through long sad nights the rending groan,
The piteous cry—and see the frantic start
That found their mutual spring in Mary's heart—
Yet 'twas a sacred one. The room no more
Was desolate and chill ; its former store
Of ornament was there ; e'en plenty smiled
On nature's stricken and erratic child,
But lost their charms for her : kind Elsie strove
To blend each homely comfort up with love,
Nor spared her scanty purse : one smile repaid
Her soul for every sacrifice she made ;
One smile of thankfulness from her, whose brain
Writhed in a ceaseless agony of pain ;
From her—the Outcast, who was shunn'd and scorned
By those whose sphere she might have still adorned,
Had not the serpent, masked in garb of truth,
Coiled round the flower of unsuspecting youth,
And spread o'er virgin buds that poisonous slime
Which sinks the flower amid the weeds of crime,

At length confounded Fever shrank away
With slow and sullen pace, robbed of his prey
By Elsie's constant care. The sufferer slept
In tranquil peace; the lonely watcher wept,
But hers were grateful tears: tears that impart
New life and lightness to the burthened heart;
That Heav'nward point the eyes, and fit each prayer
For a more sure and welcome entrance there.
Upon her knees she wept, with hands unpraised,
Her prayer was short and simple—"God be praised;"
She could no more; yet still she wept and knelt,
Communing with the angels,—and she felt
As though the world and grief had pass'd away,—
Yea, looked like one of them: a sacred ray,
Bright, pure, transparent, o'er her features past,
Like that which raptured limners love to cast
O'er the Madonna's face, to make her seem
What Genius saw her in ecstatic dream.
Round her fair neck, awakened Mary's arm
Stole softly, gently, lest that holy charm
Should be dispell'd, and on the kneeler's ear
A whisper fell, its tones intense and clear—
"Pray, Elsie, for my poor lost soul, and then
Heav'n cannot curse me if I sob—Amen."

Another witness to the deeds of man
Sought out Eternity : the sands still ran
Their downward course in Time's unerring glass ;
Another day had died. In darkling mass
Night's solemn tomb rose o'er its sepulchre,
And Elsie's prayer was heard,—was heard for her
Who had been hopeless else,—the guilty one
Guilt's trammels felt no more: the weight was gone
That weighed upon her soul. Secure of bliss
She look'd to brighter worlds,—not such as this
Polluted earth of ours,—but worlds where sin
Though clad in diamonds, dare not enter in ;
Yet where repentant sinners such as she,
The Mortal change for Immortality.
Oh, glorious hope ! when Man disdains to aid
The wreck of beauty he himself has made ;
When Woman shrinks in horror and disgust
From wretches link'd by Poverty to Lust ;
Whose foundering barks might live, did she but deign
To guide the helm, and hide the early stain ;
Those souls repentant, though by them dismay'd,
May fearless call upon a mightier aid,
And though from worms of earth their prayers are
Each contrite sob is registered in Heaven. [driven

Night coiled his vestments round him as bright morn—
Dame Nature's midwife—told a day was born.
How many greet the sun with anxious eyes,
That may not see it set, or others rise :
Yet through this world of swift and endless change,
The tide of Life rolls on. How wild ! how strange
Its ceaseless ebb and flow ! the smallest wave
Flows from some cradle, ebbing at a grave,—
Above its surface plays inconstant breath,
And o'er it strides the grisly monster Death ;
Still flows the tide of Life ; flows to that sea,
Where every surge lies hush'd—Eternity !

That night had Mary slept, and sleeping dreamed
That she had been in Heaven. How happy seemed
Its denizens. She saw no sorrow there,
But all was glory : every face was fair.
Each angel was in robes of light array'd,
And look'd like Elsie, when she knelt and pray'd,
Except the tears alone. They shed no tears—
Cause had they none—strangers were they to fears,
And cares, and griefs, like those which mother Earth
In labouring pangs too often brings to birth ;

None shunned her there, as she was shunned below,
But each voice welcomed her, and to and fro
She sped on golden pinions. When they sung
She raised her voice, and wondered that her tongue
Could utter sounds so sweet. There was no sun
To rise and set, but from a dazzling throne
Rich lustre streamed, such rays of cloudless light
That all was beautiful—transparent—bright.
Shadows were there unknown; each mirror'd face
Flung radiance back. Oh, 'twas a happy place!
She only wanted Elsie to complete
Her boundless joy, so turned her shining feet
O'er pathways paved with richer, rarer gems
Than ever deck'd earth's kingly diadems,
To those enchanted gates, which raise sublime
Their golden portals o'er the tomb of Time;
Upon whose threshold souls from sorrow sever,
To live and love throughout a bright "For ever."

From thence she look'd for Earth; but ah! how far
It seem'd from Heaven; 'twas but a twinkling star,
The most remote and faint of those that shone
Upon the verge of space. Whilst gazing on

The gulf that lay between, she heard her name
Pronounced in tones seraphic ; 'twas the same
Soft voice that bade her hope, ere yet the clay
That chained her soul to earth had passed away
She turned—'twas Elsie—in her arms a child
As lovely as herself. Robes undefiled,
Of spotless whiteness, o'er their limbs were cast
By the attending angels. From the vast
Assembly of the saints a shout was giv'n
Of welcome, echo'd through the courts of Heav'n,
As upwards borne on their effulgent wings
They soared to kneel before the King of kings.
Thrice happy dream ! she woke from sleep surprised
To find that dream as yet unrealized.

Her soul was sad no longer. Fear had fled,
And Mercy bade her hope : beside her bed
Peace held her watch :—without, the streets were rife
With noisy vehicles, and bustling life.
Beside the window Elsie sat ; her dreams
Were of the bitter past : the radiant beams
Of the declining sun, danced o'er her brow
And sported with her lips. Love's broken vow

Had robbed them of their smiles ; her graceful form
Bent like the rose-bud, when the wasting storm
Has past. She looked upon the motley throng
That big with earthly hopes careered along ;
And as she gazed in silence, thought would roam
To scenes of childhood, to her early home,
And him so lone, and old. The time drew near
When she and Mary should return to cheer
The remnant of his days, and pass their hours
Secluded from the world : were but the powers
Of strength recall'd to that enfeebled girl,
The cottage would regain its " Village Pearl."
Then arm in arm, and heart with heart entwined,
(Where 'mid the verdant meads the streamlets wind
Their humble way : or 'neath the fragrant bowers
Adorned by wreaths of Nature's wildest flowers ;
Or through the woods, when clad in vernal pride,)
They'd wander oft, and always side by side,
Until their tender barks had reached that shore
Where weary wanderers rest, and weep no more.
Such were her dreams ! when with a sudden start
That roll'd life's current back upon her heart,
She sprang upon her feet, her glance was cast
With trembling eagerness on one that past

Amid the throng beneath. "Mary, 'tis he!
'Tis Arthur, and alone!—he sees not me."
Swift through the door she past, breathless and wild,
To seek the father of her unborn child.
Affrighted Mary call'd on her to stay,
But Elsie heard it not: a parting ray
Glanced on her pillow from the sinking sun,
She closed her eyes, and sigh'd "God's will be done."

Beneath a spacious portico, upheld
By emblems of some mighty men of eld,
Exhausted Elsie sank; grimly they frown'd
Upon her sinking form; she looked around,
But vainly look'd, for Arthur: had that door
By shadows darkened, closed for evermore
On him, and Hope's last sigh? that way he pass'd,
And there he must have entered; had he cast
One look on her,—but one,—that look had brought
Conviction to her soul; but rambling thought
Will madly grasp at unsubstantial shade,
As drowning mariners, at straws for aid.
The clattering of a chariot struck her ear,
And echo'd through her soul; presaging fear

Fettered her struggling breath; close by her side
 It paused; the mansion's portal opened wide
 Its massive doors, and 'neath the portico,
 But not alone, stood Arthur: all the glow
 Of health was on his cheek; no trace was there
 Of sorrow or remorse; no sign of care,—
 All, all was gaiety: he led the way
 For one, so lovely, that the opening day
 Might envy her her charms. "Arthur!"—he turned;
 That voice was sad; it came from one who mourn'd
 O'er Love's expiring torch. The flush was gone,
 The mask of seeming virtue—Guilt put on
 The pallid front of fear. "Arthur," she cried,
 "Elsie has sought thee,—thy devoted bride
 Kneels suppliant at thy feet; she does not chide,
 But asks thee for her honour, for her life;
 Forget the past, thy fond neglected wife
 Forgives thee all." Spell-bound—amazed—
 The guilty Arthur stood; the lady gazed
 Upon his changing face: poor Elsie grasped
 Her small gloved hand, and frantically clasped [mine
 Her flowing robe. "He's mine, " she shriek'd, " he's
 By holy ties, both human and divine!—

Thou canst not take him from me, for within
I bear his other self; the brand of sin
Must not pollute my child—our sacred vow
Was registered on earth—in Heaven; this brow
Bears not the stamp of shame. When I am dead
He may be thine! Oh, God! my burning head
Racks at the thought; this heart ere long must burst;
But whilst I live he's mine, he loved ME first.
Where is thy wedded badge!—the ring? this one
Beneath the sacred fane, his hand put on.
Where! where is thine?" In eager haste she rent
The slender glove,—that simple ornament
Of circling gold fell like the deadly blight
The fabled Upas spreads, on sense and sight.
Swift to her feet she sprung in wild despair:
"Lady," she shrieked in maddening tones, "beware!
There is a court above: to its decree [ME!"
Either must bend—HEAV'N JUDGE 'TWINX THREE AND
She seiz'd on Arthur's arm—clung to his breast,
When burst the guilty rage a space suppress;
As rudely spurned,—upon the stony floor
Heart-crushed she fell—the reign of Reason o'er.

What after chanced avails not. Rugged Time
Wings the avenger on the course of crime.
Seek we the chamber where poor Mary lay
Upon the eve of that eventful day.
The silvery moon in silence sped on high,
Climbing the concave and unclouded sky,
And shedding through the room such mellow light
That Day seem'd robb'd of half his charms by Night;
A tottering old man entered. On his ear
A laugh of horror tingled; he drew near,
But palsied stood, as crouching on the bed
He saw a Maniac jabbering o'er the Dead.



CONCLUSION.



Our painful task is done. When summer came,
The stricken Elsie was but known by name.
Her gentle soul joined Heaven's seraphic choir,
And 'twixt her mother and her old grandsire,

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In yonder lone churchyard she lies at rest,
A lovely infant cradled on her breast.
But still in summer, virgin fingers spread
Festoons of flowers around her lowly bed ;
And virgin tongues in whispers faint and mild,
Speak of the maniac mother and her child ;
Whilst by her simple tomb old men relate
To listening infancy her mournful fate,
And o'er her epitaph shed many a tear.
Thus is it 'graved—

“The Village Pearl sleeps here.”

Fair Elsie, who that saw thy youth dare deem
That thou could'st fade ? That, like a painful dream
On memory's waste, when years had pass'd away,
Thy smiles would seem but shades of yesterday ;
Thy dulcet tones, faint echo's that recall
Past music ? Autumn leaves that sadly fall
Cover thy lonely home. The Summer's sun
Shines on the dwelling of the missing one.
The peaceful moon still lends her borrowed light
To deck the spangled pagentry of night.
Rough Winter's frost, as in thy palmiest hours,
Still binds the streams, still nips the loveliest flowers,

And Spring's green garlands as in mockery wave
Above thy silent and untimely grave.

Oh Time! faint shadow of Eternity;
Oh Life! frail bark on Fate's tempestuous sea;
Oh Death! grim guide to Immortality.

END OF ELSIE.

FLIGHTS
TO
FAIRYLAND.

HERMIONE— Pray you, sit by us,

And tell's a tale.

MAMILLIUS— Merry or sad, shal't be?

HERMIONE—As merry as you will.

MAMILLIUS— A sad tale's best for winter;

I have one of sprites and goblins.

HERMIONE— Let's have that, sir.

Come on, sit down :—Come on, and do your best.

“ WINTER'S TALE.”

FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND.

FIRST FLIGHT.

THE FAIRY CHARM; OR THE PRINCESS ZIMAR."

In days when Fairies and Sprites were known,
When ghosts by night
In the moon's pale light
Burst forth from their cerements, and walked in white
Round ruined mansions and church yards lone,—
In those strange days
Of goblins and fays,
When every old woman had stories to tell,
And every fat friar rare relics to sell ;
When splinters of crosses, brought prices so high
That chips, smoked and blessed would find buyers to
[buy.

When fortunes were bartered for tresses of hair,
And rags treasured up, that no pauper would wear—
When musty nail pairings, and fragments of bone,
As scraps of some canonized saint have been shown,
The smallest of which, if but kept as a charm,
Would shield him who wore it from witchcraft and harm ;
Preserve him in darkness from Sprite, Gnome, and Elf,
And scare away howling e'en Satan himself :—
In those palmy days, lived the king Catacar
And with him his daughter, the Princess Zimar.
The one fierce and cruel—despotic and old,
Enslaved by a lust for dominion and gold ;
The other—as pure as the first tints of day,
When dew-drops like diamonds, reflect every ray,
That spirit-like steals over flowret and spray,
Ere yet the sun's glories have kissed them away.
Her footsteps were light as the zephyrs soft sighs,
Yet lighter the heart that beamed forth from her eyes ;
Blue eyes—that like mirrors reflected a mind,
Unselfish, good-natured, and sweetly refined.
Her cheeks were all smiles—endless smiles did they seem,
Like curves sometimes spread o'er a calm sylvan stream ;
Bright smiles that in soulbeams of exquisite grace
Flashed forth from her heart, and illumined her face.

Her features were classic—the brow mildly bright
Like Cynthia's when seen on a soft summer's night;
To her zone o'er a neck most enchantingly fair,
In nature's profusion, bright tresses of hair
Fell, curling like tendrils that wantonly twine
In southerly climes, round the stems of the vine.
Those ringlets in soft undulations descending,
Aye varied like streamlets, as seawards they run—
Now dark, and now bright—or as clouds that in blending,
Seem purple and gold, as they flit past the sun.
Her figure was sylph-like—her wit bright and keen;
Her age—[am I right in confessing
The age of a maid?—was—[no matter]—eighteen—
[That saves us all trouble in guessing].
Eighteen!—that sweet stage on the journey through life—
Half maiden, half woman, and yet not a wife—
Though willing to be one, was lovely Zimar,
The daughter of cranky old king Catacar.

Zimar was in love—as all ladies should be

Who know that a throne

Must ere long be their own—

In love with a knight of the fairest degree;

Neither had mother,
 Sister or brother
 To love: so the knight and herself loved each other—
 But never disclosed it,
 So no one supposed it,
 Else surely the crafty old king had opposed it;
 For every one felt that her fortunes depended
 On passive submission alone;
 And knew that for years Catacar had intended
 To mate her with Prince Ferizone.
 Now Prince Ferizone was decidedly “green,”
 Though noted for cunning, and feared for his spleen;
 A species of serpent, concealing a sting
 Beneath that great title—“The heir to a king.”
 His voice was discordant, and ever his eye
 Shot glances, that gave all he uttered the lie.
 A sinister smile, o’er his lip as it curl’d,
 Betrayed the contempt that he felt for the world.—
 And yet was he “green”—for he deemed that Zimar
 Must wed, where commanded by King Catacar.
 Nor dared he to woo—for he knew not the way:
 True hearts were to him but the toys of a day;
 All women, but creatures provided to please
 The “lords of creation,” in moments of ease;

Whilst she seemed to him but a step to a throne,
That one day would blend with and strengthen his own.—
Oh ! strange things were done in those dark days of eld,
And curious opinions on wedlock were held :—
A princess, by proxy, might wed with a king
Whose features she never had seen—
Except on a brooch. or a wristlet, or ring—
And yet leave the church as his Queen.
No question of hearts could there be in those days
Of Goblins, and Spectres, and light-footed Fays,
Else women, ere words of betrothal were said,
Had seen ere they spoke, and had loved ere they wed ;
Not stepped—though a pause had involved them in
[danger—
From God's holy shrine to the bed of a stranger.

All is but vanity,
Linked with humanity ;
Policy's study has ever been pelf :
Policy's wise, for he works for himself.
Then come, my sweet Fairy, and teach me the way
To shame all that's false and decry it :
For falsehood will ever flaunt forth in the day,
If truth be not near to defy it.

But truth—potent truth!—it no more can withstand,
 Than despots, the will of the Free;
 Or barriers, wrought out of sand, on the strand,
 The rightful advance of the sea.

Young Reebee the knight was a wit of the day—
 A model of beauty and vigour;
 A Paris in judgment—brave, comely, and gay—
 A perfect Adonis in figure.—

But what are externals compared to the heart,
 Of which they are only a shadowy part;
 And what is the heart? but a part of the whole—
 The casket enshrining a God breathed soul.
 He loved sweet Zimar: for he saw in her face
 A soul fraught with virtue and feminine grace;
 And she loved the knight, for she read in his eyes
 Affection, whose ardour, all language defies,
 Though ne'er at her feet had he pleaded or knelt,
 Though ne'er had she breathed the emotions she felt.—
 In silence they pined, like Viola of old—
 Their hearts full of love, yet that love never told.
 Thus life's silver stream seldom smoothly careers,
 'Tis troubled by anxious forebodings and fears—

Forebodings of evil, and fears of success,
Lest "nay" should be sighed, where it panted for
Nor yet had she known [“yes.”
The young Prince Ferizone,
For neither had met with the other alone.
He heard of her graces as published by Fame,
And she, of him, only by Rumour and name.

One day—in the cool of the twilight hour,
The Princess reclined in a shady bower,
Thinking, and plucking the leaves from a flower;
Building air-castles for aught that I know,
As that was a pastime in vogue long ago;
When who should intrude on her silent retreat,
But Prince Ferizone :—He fell down at her feet,
And begged that she would not arise from her seat,
Until she had heard, that his heart was replete,
With what he called “Love” for a being so sweet.
His ardent confession, though laboured, was neat;
Yet lovely Zimar, in her blithesome conceit,
Controll’d not her mirth, for she thought him a fool,
Or else some bold youth, freshly loosened from school.
She laughed at his vows, as they witnessed that “he
Would be all a husband and lover should be ;”

Yea, fifty things more, did he swear—but my pen
Disdains to repeat his light nothings again;
Such promises made, ere the altar be past,
Are seldom, by wise folks, expected to last.
“Devotion and Love,” *anglice*, “Twaddle and Lies,”
Rush forth in rich volumes of speeches and sighs,
Well oathed, that the credulous mind may believe,
What only is said, with a hope to deceive.

Zimar loudly laughed at each huge protestation :
[“How vulgar,” say some, “in a maid of her station”—
But guiltless was she of the world’s many wiles,
So music most frequently burst through her smiles,
And leaped from her lips, like fair spirits at play,
As light as her own merry soul, and as gay.]
She laughed as he spoke of “Old Hymen’s smooth yoke”
And deemed he but practiced some new-fangled joke—
What else could it be, when he raved of “devotion”
And “love sympathetic”—how monstrous the notion,
That she, all perfection, should suffer her charms
 To fade ere they burst into bloom.
No!—better by far than Prince Ferizone’s arms
 Were the darksome embrace of the tomb.

Thus reasoned the lovely Zimar, in those days
Of Fables and Relics, of Goblins and Fays;
And thus, in our times, reason ladies, whose hands
 Harsh fathers can give, or withdraw—
Or worse—where the Chancellor's heartless commands
 Confines them in fetters of Law.
Oh! mockery all, where love's homage is paid,
 To titles, distinction, and gold—
Where—as at an auction—the heart of a maid
 Is offered—and bid for—and sold.
So was it, when prized were bones, relics, and Fays,
And so still it is, in our own palmy days;
Though Fays (save in fancy) no longer abound,
And bones are ground up to make turnips grow round.

Oh! wrath waxed the Prince, when he felt that his suit,
Was nipped in the blossom, and scathed at the root;
In anger he rushed from the arbour, and found,
Old King Catacar hemmed with courtiers around;
And there in the presence, he cried: "Sire, your daughter
Repulsed me, though prince like, I courteously sought her;
I knelt at her feet—but all hopeless my case,
For when I sighed 'love me'—she laughed in my face."

Like an old horned owl,
Or some ill omened fowl,
Sat fierce Catacar, all his features a scowl.
Then gruffly, he cried—"Let my daughter be sought,
And courtiers fall back—make a ring"—
His orders were done, and the Princess was brought,
And set face to face with the king.
'Stand forth, Ferizone! To our Court be it known,
Thy views of alliance, have long been our own;
We ask not the idle consent of the maid,
She hears us, and feels that we must be obeyed.—
Twelve months from this day,
Thou shalt bear her away,
Or else she shall find there's the devil to pay.
Now vanish! Begone! Ye have heard our decree—
The Court is dismissed—as we've willed—it shall be."
The courtiers departed—but bitter tears started,
Unchecked from Zimar's lovely eyes, as sad hearted,
She sought out her chamber, and sat down alone,
To curse her hard fate, and the Prince Ferizone.

Night vanished at length, and as morning broke,
The Princess Zimar from soft slumber awoke;

But whether she sat up and rubbed her eyes ;
Or, drew back the curtains, to gaze at the skies ;
Or, breakfasted only on tears and sighs ;
Or, whether, reclining, she counted the flies
That walked on the ceiling, I dare not surmise ;

In short 'tis not mine to say.

Suffice it, she deemed it expedient, and wise,
In time from her cushions of down to rise,

And ring for her "gorgeous array."

First, hiding in slippers, petite and neat,
A pair of the smallest and prettiest feet ;
And, secondly, greeting the shadow in white,
That looked from her mirror, and shocked her sight;
For traces were there, each tinged with red,
Of the sorrowful tears her bright eyes shed,
On the evening before, ere she went to bed.

She rang for her nurse—(this woman was old,
A female Bacchanté—a caudle to scold ;
A gorgon to gaze at—a mechanized thing
Adapted to bear out the rules of the King).
She entered—informing the Princess, that she
For twelve dreary months, must her prisoner be ;

That chamber, the jail, by her father assigned,
As the place where her highness must rest confined.

Oh ! sadly the news, on her senses fell ;
More sad than the sounds of the deep toned bell
When tolling a dead man's passing knell ;
She covered her face with her tiny hands,
And bowed to that father's unjust commands.
[She might have done less, but she could not do more,
For her jailor had gone forth and shut to the door—
Nay further—pursuing the tyrants decree—
The old hag had locked it, and taken the key.]

Zimar sought the window—'twas high and barred—
Beneath it—patrolling the great court-yard,
A soldier, on duty, kept constant guard.
Beyond it, the fields in rich verdure were seen,
They looked very lovely, inviting, and green,
As o'er them, unshackled, careered the air,
And vainly she sighed, and desired to be there.

Whilst pouting and sighing,
Alternately crying

With maiden vexation, and thinking of dying,
Or getting the steam up and boldly defying
Her amiable parent the king.

She saw in the distance, and rapidly flying—
A bird of some kind on the wing.

But whether that bird were a delicate dove,
With, under its pinion, a token of love;
Or whether 'twas only a vulgar crow,
She could not be sure—for she did not know.
But this she felt, as she watched its flight,
Gleaming like gold in the rich sunlight,—
That gladly she'd barter her robes to be,
As far from the Castle as it was, and free.

Two noble gallants, with a courtly train,
Emerged from the valley and gemmed the plain:
(That plain o'er whose verdure, a dozen lines back
The Zephyr skipped lightly, and left no track);
She knew they were Nobles—for then, I suppose,
As in our own days, men were judged by their clothes,
The weight of their chains, the size of their rings,
With other such frivolous, time-honoured things.
Ah! many, though empty in heart and head,
When decked in the titles of heroes dead,

(Like the Donkey wrapped up in the Lion's hide)
 Are honoured as noble—they're nobly allied;
 Oh ! worlds of trouble some ancestors save
 To those who owe place, not to worth, but the grave—
 Who ne'er would distinction or riches have known
 If judged by the standard of Merit alone;
 Whilst men who have hearts no gold can buy,
 Whose souls are the mines in which treasures lie,
 From whence are hewn forth those gems of skill
 That keep Art and Science advancing still,
 Are passed by as Nothings, or pushed aside
 By Nothings begotten of purses and pride—
 Nothings, who lounge through a lifetime of ease,
 Still dying—as barristers rise—by degrees;
 But living or dying, whilst round them are shed
 The glories purloined from the tombs of the Dead;
 The world, *sans* comment, still crouching to Fame,
 Will fawn on these Nothings, because of a Name;
 Thus men homage pay to the shadows in which
 Are shrouded the prodigal heirs of the rich;
 Wealth—wealth is the “Something” these Nothings retain:
 Take “Something” from “Nothing,” and what will remain?
 But truce to digressions so vague and absurd—
 Let's come to the Princess, the Nobles, and Bird.

She knew they were Nobles, they looked so grand—
One had a hooded hawk perched on his hand,
The other a bow, and some feather-tipped arrows,
Like those little boys use at school to shoot sparrows,
With these slight exceptions: the arrows were long,
The bow burnished steel, and remarkably strong;
For archery then was a favourite sport,
And hawking a pastime reserved for the Court—
Though busy historians most pointedly say
Such games were not known at so early a day;
However, the reader's clear judgment must see
That as I and History do not agree,
He should believe one of the two, therefore he
Assents with a smile, and gives credence to me.

The first-quoted noble glanced up at the sky,
And there the free bird on the wing caught his eye
As swiftly it sped on its way;
He snatched off the hood from his hawk, and on high,
With jesses detached, and an ominous cry,
It mounted to swoop on its prey.
Oh! sad was the soul of the Princess Zimar,
As breathless she sat in her window, afar

From what she had envied a moment before,
Preferring its plumes to the garments she wore ;—
Fleetly it sped ; but the hawk was above,
And as they approached her she saw—'twas a dove.

Swiftly her lattice was open flung,
Clearly her voice from the chamber rung,
As through the barred windows she waved in air
A handkerchief perfumed with odours rare ;
Pity and sympathy prompted the deed,
For cruelty formed no part of her creed.
Swift as the agents of thought and sight
The hawk swooped down from his airy height ;
But swifter still, from the vale below,
Winged by the strength of the bright steel bow,
A feathered shaft, with a burnished head,
Like a shooting star, or a rocket, sped,
Arresting the slayer, whose downward career
Was quickened in death ; whilst all trembling with fear,
But scatheless, the dove o'er the window's high bar
Dropped down on the lap of the lovely Zimar.

Tenderly raised she her fluttering guest,
Pressing its plumes to her delicate breast,

As if in assurance of safety and rest.
Spotless those plumes, but no longer they shone,
So white was the neck that they rested upon;
Lustrous they seemed, for they could not compare
With beauty like hers, so transcendently fair;—
As well might the silvery disc of the moon
Her pale face display in the sunlight of noon,
And claim 'mid that flood blaze of glory, by right,
The homage men pay her in silence and night,
As durst the dove's plumage, though faultless in shade,
Compete with the graces the Princess displayed.

Thankfully then towards the Noble below,
Whose hand sped the dart from the burnished steel bow,
She turned to look all her feelings could speak;
But wherefore that start? why the flush on her cheek?
The gallant whose hawk at the trembler had flown,
Was—right! you have guessed it—The Prince Ferizone;
The other, whose shaft interrupted his flight, [Knight.
Was—who could have thought it?—'twas Reebee the

The Prince, in his wrath, threatened, spluttered, and fumed,
With sundry strange gesticulations,

At Reebee the Knight, who so boldly presumed
 To cut short his falcon's gyrations ;
Yea, swore "were he King, his young head should be doomed
 For spoiling the day's recreations,"
Whilst Reebee, unmoved, at his passion but smiled,
 And turned on his heel to depart,
When Ferizone, furious, proclaimed him "a child,
 A squeamish, dull coward at heart."

The taunt was an insult, so openly thrown
That nought could efface it, save blood—blood alone !
(For duels were then, amongst high-born men,
 Protected and honoured as regal,
Though now, in our times, they are looked on as crimes—
Quite Irish, and strictly illegal.)
Then swift as red lightnings disparting the air
The swords of the combatants, sheathless and bare,
 In deadly contention were cross'd,
Whilst motionless all, from the bars of her tower,
The Princess Zimar, reft of language and power,
 Watched only who won and who lost ;
Nor spared she a thought on the delicate dove,
So fierce were the warrings of Hope, Fear, and Love,

As each in her breast struggled boldly for place,
And cast its reflex o'er her exquisite face.

Like dazzling meteors gleamed each blade
As o'er a foeman's form it played,
Obedient to the mute command
Of either noble's sinewy hand;
Emitting sparks, as though their ire—
When clashed the steel—flashed forth in fire,
Whilst blows were dealt, or dashed aside,
And furious thrusts were foiled,
And Ferizone, despite his pride,
At times a space recoiled,
For strength and skill before him stood,
Thwarting his fiendish thirst for blood.
Yet, though opposed in deadly strife
(Where life for death encountered life),
The Prince for hateful vengeance burned,
His nobler foe advantage spurned—
All feelings of late insults cast
Had, with the words that clothed them past.
No wish had he, his passion o'er,
To stain his noble hands in gore—

Though still buoyed up with confidence,
He fought in knightly self defence.

As thoughts too oft are misconceived,
So Reebee's were;—the Prince believed
The knight held back from servile fear,
And so much bolder grown,
Nearer he pressed, and yet more near,
Urged forward in his mad career
By fiendish hate alone,
But skill, malignity defied,
And coolly cast its blows aside;
Till by a subtle ward, the sword
Of Ferizone forsook its lord,
Who stood before the Knight disarmed,
Vindictive still—though still unharmed.

But hark to that cry of delight, from on high,
It burst o'er their ears, as though pealed from the sky.
Both victor and vanquished in speechless amazement,
Glanced first at the heavens, and then at the casement,
Within which, secured by each dark rusty bar,
Spectatress of all, stood the Princess Zimar.

In silence they listened, but 'twas not repeated,
For swiftly Zimar, from the lattice retreated.
So courteously bowing, the Knight sheathed his brand,
And offered the Prince, in fast friendship, his hand.
The Prince took the hand, with a marked hesitation,
And then they departed in close conversation,
As though what had happened, were only a joke,
And fighting a mild relaxation ;
Like single-stick practice—where heads can be broke,
By way of a slight recreation.
The eyes of Zimar, as they passed from her sight,
Still followed the figure of Reebee, the Knight ;
Through tears, the heart's envoys, they placidly shone,
As gazing on two, they had sense but for one ;
F'orgetful of all save that object alone,
And heedless of even the Prince Ferizone.

Absorbed thus she stood—when a voice in her ear,
Said sweetly “ A friend of thy Reebee's is near.”
She started,—the strains were too fine to be human,
Though breathed through the musical lips of a woman.
Amazement !—she turned to gaze on a face
Replete like her own with each feminine grace,

And 'neath it a figure whose beauty might vie
 With Juno or Pallas, if either were nigh ;
 And bear off the prize, that by Paris was given
 To Venus, whom Vulcan cast lots for in heaven.
 But where was the dove ?—Had it vanished in air ?—
 No vestige—no trace of the trembler was there :
 She glanced at each crevice—it could not be found,
 Though carefully scanned she the chamber around,—
 She listened !—but no,—she detected no sound ;
 No cooings—no fluttering pinions betrayed
 Its strange whereabouts to the ears of the maid ;
 The chamber was then, as it had been before,
 The key with her jailer, outside of the door ;
 Whilst strongly as ever the window was barred
 That looked on the fields o'er the dismal court yard.

Again on the stranger intently she gazed,
 Unmoved as a statue—bewildered—amazed—
 Half fearful—that *certainly*—her wits must be crazed,
 (Like Faust, when the fiend—*vide* Goethe—was raised.)
 For beauties were there of a texture so fine,
 So sylph like, transparent, and sweetly divine,
 So faultless in figure—so charming in feature,
 With tones so melodious and airy,

That lovely Zimar, deemed the exquisite creature,
Must be either Angel or Fairy.
Thus silently viewing each other, they stood,
For beauty in essence and substance was there ;
By every perfection and virtue endued,
A Daughter of Earth, and a Spirit of Air.

“ A Fairy I am,” quoth the stranger, whose smile,
In pensiveness beamed on our princess, the while ;
Who awed by a presence, so radiantly fair,
Attempted—not vainly—to murmur a prayer.
“ Nay, fear me not, Princess—the good need not fear,
Though legions of demons unfettered were near ;
The good love the good, as the brave love the brave,
And therefore came I, not to scare, but to save :
To give you that freedom, which envy and pride,
In parent and suitor have harshly denied :
To shew you the hearts of the Nobles who fought,
And teach you how widely Speech differs from Thought.”

“ If men were, as man was, ere Adam was driven
From Eden, that garden so honored of Heaven ;
Then tongues would speak only what sprung from the heart,
Not falsify facts through the medium of art.

But no, 'tis not thus—disobedience was sin,
 And with it the ills of his nature crept in;
 The soul needed something to mask it, and sought
 In falsehood, an agent to qualify thought.
 Hence, speech, like a sychophant, acts for the mind,
 Whilst falsehood, its colleague, leaves truth far behind;
 Still wearing its semblance, and oft times believed,
 By those, who deceiving—their selves are deceived.

“If faces were mirrors, reflecting the brain,
 Whose secrets are born of the soul;
 If breasts were transparent, and motives as plain,
 As characters traced on a scroll,
 What mockeries then would soft compliments seem,
 How simply could vice be detected,
 How rarely would virtues the righteous esteem,
 Be met with on earth and respected.

In high and low,
 All is but show;
 Hypocrisy revels wherever you go,
 Ruling o'er men with an iron rod,
 Yet cherished and prized as a household God.
 Hearts are as books to eyes like mine—
 Thoughts I can read, as I've rendered thine,

For those of my race have power to see
Things that are hidden from mortal ken ;
Part of that power I breathe on thee,
Thou purest, amongst the daughters of men."

The lovely Zimar felt a breath on her cheek,
Like soft breezes woo'd by the sweet summer eves ;
When Zephyrs cease toying with flowrets, and seek
A moments repose, mid their delicate leaves.
A chain round her neck by the fairy was thrown,
To which was suspended a magical charm,
That rendered its wearer unseen and unknown,
And shielded her ever from malice and harm
Whene'er she desired to be seen for a space,
The amulet needed alone to be veiled—
Exposed—she was hidden, and vacant her place,
As mists that at noontide the sun has exhaled.

" Now mortal adopted by those of a line
Immortal—go forth as a daughter of mine ;
And weigh, as you mingle with creatures of earth,
The merits of Genius, contrasted with Birth.
The one soars aloft from the humblest condition,
Though trammelled by those of superior position ;

Who jealous and selfish, would still be secure,
And tread Merit down, that themselves may be sure.

“ Yet be not astounded at strange contrarieties,
Hour after hour will unfold fresh varieties—
In which you'll perceive that the absence of brains
Is called not in question, where gold reigns instead ;
That what in the wealthy some Virtue retains,
Is Vice in the pauper who hungers for bread.
Look not in faces—in tongues or eyes,
Nor even in acts for truth ;
In each of them subtle hypocrisy lies,
Through age, and manhood, and youth.
Souls are the books your eyes must scan,
For their sense is more than human ;
Read them, and blush for deceitful man,
And that *arch*-deceiver—Woman.”

So counselled a Fay in the dark days of eld,
When Faries in high estimation were held ;
For bigotry, crime, and intolerance then,
Stalked through the earth 'midst the children of men.
But precepts, like those, would be vain in our day,
Enlightenment having o'erthrown superstition ;

Crime, Bigotry, Tyranny, crawling away,

Expelled by the march of man's moral condition ;

So little of selfishness looks through his eyes,

So guiltless are great ones of sordid ambition—

So anxious the rich—that poor neighbours may rise,

By Merit and Mind to exalted position.

So safely is Justice hoodwinked with a veil,

When weighing the errors that harrass humanity

That she never sees a bribe placed in her scale,

To purchase a verdict of "Partial Insanity."*

Such things have been known—but 'twas ere education,

Remodelled the laws of uncultured creation ;

And now, through the medium of civilization,

Immutable—pure—she presides o'er our nation,

Unbiassed by poverty, beauty, or station.

Guilt still is guilt—although plated with gold,

Robes are with rags placed by her on equality ;

Not as it was in those dark days of old,

"Crime" in the one—in the other "Frivolity."

But blessings like these most decidedly rise,

From tying the bandages tight round her eyes."

* Written when Shop lifting was distinguished by a new title "Kleptomania."

The Fairy ceased speaking, and moved to the door,
Which opened, unaided, though bolted outside;
Thence swiftly they passed, and in silence before
The gentle Zimar, moved her sweet featured guide.
But whilst they were wending
Their way, and descending
The spiral stone stairs, that appeared without ending,
To lovely Zimar, who in sad trepidation
Entreated the Fairy to guide her—
So fearful was she, lest her goodly relation
Each moment might start forth beside her—
Most strange to relate she forgot that the charm
Displayed on her breast could protect her from harm;
Forgot it had power, save when hidden its sheen,
To render its wearer unheard and unseen.

They had almost pass'd o'er
The white marble paved floor
That lead from the stairs through a long corridor;
When, horror! there came,
Side by side up the same
Her father, and with him her jailor, the dame,
In deep conversation. She listened—a name
Was coupled by both in one breath, with her own.

That name was her suitor's, the Prince Ferizone.

She moved not, spellbound .

As though chained to the ground

She stood, whilst above her in shadowy sound

Those names, 'neath the roof seemed alone to resound,

As airily echo disported around.

In anguish and fear

As those sounds shocked her ear,

She shrouded her breast ! and the speakers drew near,

Espying her trembling, in helpless alarm,

The moment her robe overshadowed the charm.

“ Hey day !!

Whither so far

From thy chamber gay ? ”

Quoth old King Catacar ;

Does the free bird pine in its lonely cage,

And pant for a loftier flight—

Or sigh for a glittering equipage,

And halls where beauties bright,

Like dazzling meteors, gem the scene—

Each one as she moves, a gala queen ? ”

So spoke the fierce King in his bantering mood,

As steadily facing the Princess he stood

With elbows rectangular, eyes deeply set,
 Like Kean (mem.—*the* Kean) in his role, “Bajazet;”
 Vindictively glancing askance at his daughter,
 As once did the wolf on the lamb by the water,
 According to Æsop—but every one knows
 The fable to which I allude, I suppose.
 Whilst stood she—unmoved, with her hands on her breast,
 Like those who to stone were transmuted with awe—
 By fear overburdened, with horrors oppressed,
 As though ’twere the head of Medusa she saw.
 Whilst fiercely he eyed her,
 The Fay crept beside her,
 And whispered—“Remember the token.”
 Zimar dropped her robe, and the spell that had tied her
 At once was dissevered and broken.

Invisible then as the Fairy, Zimar
 Stepped softly outside, as old King Catacar
 Sprang forward to seize her, but seized in her stead
 The column behind her arising;
 ’Twas granite—and as it was struck by his head
 The shock must have been most surprising;
 But far more surprising, she found it, to trace
 Each change on his erst imperturbable face,

As swiftly he shrunk from so hard an embrace ;
Around him, beside him, above and below—
Still staring, and gasping—"My eyes!! here's a go!!"
Whilst prostrate with fear—for her limbs refused aid—
The wrinkled she jailor signed crosses, and prayed :
For abject as slaves—though in cruelty bold—
Are those who have hearts that are callous and cold.

Astounded were both, and both anxious to solve
The problem—how flesh could so swiftly dissolve—
For flesh, blood, and bone, they could swear to have seen
In substance, where lately the Princess had been
So leave we the couple, transfixed to the floor,
And follow Zimar, through the nail-studded door ;
No longer in thralldom, but happy and free,
As heroines—such as herself—ought to be.

FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND.

FIRST FLIGHT.

THE FAIRY CHARM; OR THE PRINCESS ZIMAR."

PART II.

When Love in his soft rosy fetters has bound us,
Each spell sheds a halo of beauty around us.
The beauties of art though so changeful and fleeting,
With natures ripe beauties in friendship competing—
Each beauty itself in fresh beauties arraying,
The beauties of mind, purer beauties displaying,
Like circles in water that still keep extending
And multiply others, that seem without ending
E'en thus, everything that Zimar gazed upon
With beauty supernal, effulgently shone ;
The dark massive walls of the closely barred tower
Where lately a captive she pined,
Seemed gay to her sense, as the cool shady bower,
'Neath which, when she sat in the calm twilight hour

Unconsciously plucking the leaves from a flower,
Prince Ferizone opened his mind.
All things that had life, and all things that had none,
Around her, beneath, or above ;
Seemed decked with fresh glories shed forth by the sun,
The sunlight of Freedom and Love.

And there in the midst of the great court yard,
Where the vigilant sentry kept constant guard,
Whose measured tread from her lattice high
She heard as the dove and the hawk drew nigh,—
The Fairy stood still, and in accents as clear
As soft tinkling cymbals, thus bade her adieu—
“My hour is at hand, I must soon disappear
Yet ever my spirit shall watch over you.
Remember my precepts—be never misled !
Mistake not slight tissues of gilding, for gold—
True worth rest alone in the heart and the head,
And shells of the oyster rich pearls may enfold
Ne’er judge men of earth by the Names they inherit,
Be guided alone by the Genius that soars,
For those who would rise to the standard of Merit
Must never rest idly, or sleep on their oars.

ADVANCE! is the watchword with spirits of fire;
 SUCCESS, though obscured in the distance, their aim;
 Up, up, ever upwards they boldly aspire
 Till graved are their Deeds on the altars of Fame.
 'Tis such achieve greatness; and greatness achieved
 Is richer than greatness transmitted by birth;
 For shadows are honors by birthright received,
 Whilst honors wrought out, are the glories of earth.
 Men are like books, some are gorgeously bound,
 But useless within, for the souls are unsound;
 Like apples that bloom by the shores of that sea
 Which rests where the cities accursed used to be;
 Whilst others, though rugged and humble outside,
 The richest endowments of nature may hide,
 Which, once brought to light, must a country adorn,
 And stand forth as landmarks to ages unborn."

So saying the Fay,
 • In a kiss sped away—
 A kiss pure and sweet as fresh odours in May;
 Whilst lovely Zamar, and the soldier on guard,
 Were all that remained in that ancient Court-yard.
 Then feeling assured of protection from harm,
 She straightway resolved upon testing her charm,

So shrouding her breast with her small snowy hand,
She paused,—as the sentry cried lustily “Stand!”

Uncouth was his visage from service and toil,
And seared by the hardships that wait on turmoil.
His figure was stalwart, yet lacking all grace,
And rough as the lines deeply graved in his face;
Yet maugre those drawbacks, there beamed from his eyes,
Respect, strangely mingled with sudden surprise;
Surprise! that a vision so startlingly fair,
Should burst on his view, 'mid the suns golden beams;
Respect! for he deemed her a creature of air
Akin to the angel that smiled on his dreams. [deep
“What art thou?” he asked; but that voice loud and
Was low as the mother's who guards o'er the sleep
Of love's first remembrance, when hushed into rest,
The infant—yet sinless—reclines on her breast.
“Whence com'st thou, and why? say for good or for ill?”
He strove to be gruff—but his voice trembled still;
For Innocence e'en in its helplessness throws
A mantle of awe, o'er the hearts of its foes.—
“I come from yon tower,” quoth the smiling Zimar;
“Then lady, you pass not, for king Catacar

Hath sworn that shouldst thou escape me, my head,
 Though ugly and grim, shall be claimed in your stead"
 The soldier spoke out, for his fears were dispelled
 On finding 'twas one of our earth he beheld—
 Though scarcely a moment before he believed
 That he on his watch had an angel received.
 "Nay bar not my path—let me pass thee I pray"
 "My duty fair Princess commands me say, nay"—
 Annoyingly dogged the sentry moved not,
 But stood as though statue-like fixed to the spot—
 His giant proportions commanding the space
 That led through a half opened gate from the place.

The Princess—her fingers yet clasped round the charm—
 Advanced, and laid lightly one hand on his arm;
 She scanned his rough visage, and in it she saw
 Discipline, that looked upon duty as law.
 But deeper within she perceived that regret
 With pity wept mutely that ere they had met.
 "Say, hast thou a daughter?" He paused, "I had one."
 "You loved her?" "I did," "Where is she?" "Dead
 and gone,"
 He sighed forth the words as those only can sigh
 Whose feelings when crushed, lie too deep for the eye.—

“Her age?” “Was as thine is.” “Oh were she but here
To plead by my side, with a word or a tear,
Thou couldst not refuse her—thy feelings would bend—
Thou durst not again to the prayers, answer ‘no’—
Of one who too high to be ranked as thy friend,
Yet knows not the love that a father should show;
Thy heart wakes within thee, take pity on me,
Oh vex not her spirit, but let me pass free.”

The rugged old soldier with hand hard and brown [down
His eyes sought to shade—but too late—there dropped
Twin angels in tear drops, that glistened aspace
Like crystals dissolved, on his rough swarthy face;
A moment they lent to his features a light,
So radiant and soft, so pellucidly bright,
That beauty o’er plainness insensibly stole
And made it a mirror reflecting the soul;
Then vanished like dews by the sun kissed away
From natures fresh cheeks at the dawning of day.
“Pass on—though my head “said the soldier “be claimed,
“Tis better die nobly than live when ashamed”—
His march he resumed, and in dignity trod,
A brilliant rough hewn, by the hand of his God—
As slowly the spell which her fingers concealed,
The Princess o’ercome by emotion revealed.—

Invisible, then, wrapped in thought and amazed,
 A space on that rugged exterior she gazed,
 The which, though enslaved, toil-begrimed, unrefined,
 Within it the impress of Godhead enshrined.
 An impress untainted by falsehood or art,
 That beamed from his eyes, as it worked in his heart;
 So rough mountain tops in rich splendour are drest
 In summer, when day sheds his beams o'er the west;
 Or clouds, that in masses, the storm king hath roll'd—
 One sunbeam translates to Pavillions of gold.

But horror ! whilst plodding his weary round,
 A nail studded door slightly opened he found !

Six paces, not more

From the spot, was the door

Where he and the Princess conversed just before;
 Whilst scowling within—'twas a little ajar—
 Spectator of all stood old King Catacar.

The soldier drew back with a species of dread,
 Instinctively raising his hand to his head,
 And feeling his neck ; whilst conjectures were rife
 Concerning the joints least secure from the knife,

Assured that the oath of the king, now in force,
"Twixt body and head must proclaim a divorce!
Such thoughts (pleasant truly) a moment oppressed him—
And then Catacar waddled forth and addressed him:—

“ Good soldier, my daughter
Escaped—hast thou caught her?
For vainly all over the castle I’ve sought her,
Ah! tell me, I pray—
Hath she wandered this way
By feelings opposed to my own—led astray?”

So questioned the king, as with sinister glance
He eyed the rough sentry, who faltered, askance;
For though Catacar was ferocious in mind,
In torture his skill was unique and refined;
And knew he, that rather than stoop to a lie,
That soldier—condemned by confession—would die.
The soldier confessed:—“Sire, the Princess is gone;—
We met—we conversed—and I let her pass on.”

“ Oh! treason!—crime!—sacrilege!—murder and
The king shouted out, [fire!”
As he hobbled about,
Like a dry bony skeleton fixed upon wire;

Whilst dignified still, and unaltered in mood,
The sentry erect in integrity stood.

“A guard! Ho! a guard!”

And the spacious court-yard
Re-echoed each tone so discordant and hard;
As swiftly from every side soldiers well armed
Rushed forth—by that cry of fierce fury alarmed;
Whilst 'midst them, and close to the sentry, Zimar
Unseen, traced the feelings that fired Catacar.

Indignant she felt, as each deeply carved trace
Of vengeance unsated seemed smoothed on his face—
Whilst dark in his soul, by hypocrisy chained,
The feelings of hatred and wrath were restrained.

“Brave soldiers! my child

Ever duteous and mild,
Has been by the spells of this demon beguiled;
Whisked off, I've no doubt, by inhibited power,
From where she knelt praying in yonder high tower.
Attach him—we'll see whether tortures can press
The truth from a slave who declines to confess.”

Aghast the stalwart warrior stared,
As swift his sinewy limbs were bared

And round them closed the clanking chains
As earnest of protracted pains.
The heartless scoffs—the ribald jeers
Of ancient comrades, mocked his ears ;
As each displayed unwonted skill
In eking out the tyrant's will,
On one who with them fought and bled,
 In fields where glory raised his throne
Above the mutilated dead,
 Who fell in quarrels not their own.
Thus was it in the elder day
Ere crimes like these were purged away !
But now we know the common cause
Is meted out by juster laws.
Philanthropy, with outstretched wings,
 Benignly shrouding great and small—
From those who grace the Courts of Kings,
 To those who have no homes at all.
Now rulers, by example, teach
(Leaving the Church her right to preach):—
Eschewing clubs on Sabbath days,
 From innate motives strictly pure ;
Thus weaning from their evil ways
 The vulgar and unlettered poor,

Whose wrinkled fingers, hard and soiled,
 Throughout the tedious week have toiled :
 Oh ! days like ours, are glorious days,
 Befitting well a Poet's lays—
 Where Peers and Peasants form the theme,
 And Self-denial reigns supreme.

Old King Catacar sat down to dine,
 As merry and free
 As a tyrant could be,
 Determined on drowning his anger on wine.
 Courtiers were there
 The repast to share,
 With liveried lackey's behind each chair—
 The lackeys all dressed
 In broad cloths of the best,
 And brilliantly furbished, like counterfeits sold
 By Israel's innocent offspring as gold.
 The courtiers were all of the purest breed,
 All jolly good fellows to drink and feed,
 With legacies ample of empty pride,
 And little else—saving long purses beside.
 On right of the King, as next heir to a throne,
 With flagon in hand, sat the Prince Ferizone,

Toying betimes with the hilt of his sword,
And glancing askance towards the end of the board,
Where—furthest removed—sat young Reebee the Knight,
As least in degree,
Though none nobler than he,
If judged by the standard of Merit and Right ;
But Merit and Right, in that banquetting hall,
Were measured by Birth or not measured at all ;
So differed those days—the dark days—from our own,
Where honours are shed o'er Deservers alone.

Loud laughter awoke
As joke followed joke,
Yet King Catacar rarely motioned or spoke—
Unheeded, each dish,
Though of viands most rich,
Was passively passed—but he drank like a fish !
Yet, hold !—what fish drink passes out at the gills—
They breathe what the liquid in passing distils ;—
Not so with the King—what he swallowed arose
In tints of bright purple, and garnished his nose.

Beside him, by courtesy vacant, was placed
The stool that Zimar at the feast should have graced ;

And empty it seemed, for not one was aware
That, scanning all motives, the Princess was there.

Assisted by her magic art,
She probed each wily courtier's heart ;
Foul whited sepulchres they seemed,
That inly with corruption teemed :
Fœtid and rank, as once was held
Our silvery Thames, in " Days of Eld,"
By men who never were aware
Why " Fair is foul, and foul is fair."

Yes, there she saw the Hate that clings,
Though checked by fear, round Thrones and Kings—
The Hate that dare it but confide
In kindred Hate on every side,
Lacked neither ready power or skill
To crush whatever curbed its will.
Around that board, though well restrained,
The fiercest, deadliest passions reigned.—
Hid 'neath the smiling mask of Love,
Ambition, Pride, and Envy strove ;
Whilst wily Falsehood smoothly strung
Truth's counterfeits round every tongue,

Save his alone, whose low degree
Was furthest set from dignity.
The King and Prince each other eyed
As calmly quaffed they side by side ;
Each one by each seemed idolized,
Yet each despising, each despised.

[But these, recollect, were the barbarous days,
When credence was placed in Ghosts, Spectres, and Fays.
How thankful and happy should we be, who know
That times differ now from the times long ago.]

At length Ferizone pushed his flagon away,
And looked as men look who have something to say ;
The King saw that look—'twas portentous and odd—
Yet spoke not, but bade him proceed with a nod.

“Great King, is it well

That in whispers I tell

Adventures most strange, which this morning befel,
As I and the knight at the end of this board
Sought pastimes your forests and valleys afford,
Where pines tall and aged in myriads abound,
And fence in, like giants, the vales they surround ?”
The King slightly grunted, and carelessly said,
In phrase quite laconic and terse, “Go ahead.”

“ This morn, so please your majesty,
Yon silent Knight went forth with me ;
Intent on pleasure—less I thought
Of stations differing than I ought :
Of that reserve which only blends
With princely equals, as with friends ;
But let it pass—the fault was mine :
The right to judge I waive as thine.”

“ The hawk so highly prized and trained,
Whose symmetry your wisdom deigned
To praise, I held in jesses chained,
Determined on trying
His fleetness in flying,
Ere yet I had begged that the sage Catacar
The gift might receive for the beauteous Zimar.”

Here Ferizone made for an instant a pause,
Like actors and singers who wait for applause ;
Still eyeing the King, who had previously seized
His flagon, and raised it to drink,
But who, o'er the rim, was most graciously pleased
To thank his intents with a wink.

That wink to the Prince more assurance conveyed
Than legions of words in soft language arrayed ;

For speeches—especially those from a throne—
Were weighed at their worth by the Prince Ferizone,
Who sought not in such for the least perspicuity,
But rather for mystical, cold, ambiguity.
Oh ! had he but lived until now he might see
How lucid are speeches from thrones to the Free—
How much of the past they desire to explain,
How much in the future they purpose to gain—
Summed up in a language adapted to all,
A beacon of light to the great and the small—
From Ministers basking in royalty's smiles,
To Outcasts who crawl through the mire of St. Giles.

King Catacar winked !—at an honour so great
The Prince closer drew to the high chair of state,
And told how the hawk had been slain in its flight—
“Vindictively butchered” by Reebee the Knight—
His motive, an insult, thus publicly shown
To one who was viewed as a friend to the throne.

Wroth waxed the King at each venomous word,
Sublime was his rage when he heard what occurred,
For, sooth to relate, he had longed for the bird ;

And nine out of ten
Of the high-born men
Who lived in the days brought to light by my pen—
Of Fairies, Ghosts, Goblins, Sprites, Phantoms, and Elves—
Were wont to secure all they liked to themselves;
Though now, in our times, Light and Civilisation,
Converting all men into lords of creation,
Have made them disdain—e'en in thought—peculation;
Pomp physicked, and proving the heavens more just,
Its superflux shaking to those in its trust.

The Prince continued his tale to tell
With lies freshly forged in the regions of—well
We'll pass o'er the name of those regions, nor write
What might seem offensive, and not too polite.
Thus said he—first lifting the flagon on high,
And shaping his course as he drained it quite dry:—

“The hawk he slew, nor paused he there,
But, ere my trusty blade was bare,
With falchion brandishing in air,

My life the recreant sought;
Then, charmed by mystic rites, my brand
Unbidden leaped into my hand,
As forced, in self-defence, to stand—

Unseconded I fought;

But, Royal Sire, the coward's will,
By Hate and Envy prompted still,
Was rendered impotent to kill
When matched with courage, strength, and skill.
Here let me cease; I dare not say
The chances that amidst the fray
In pitying mood I cast away;
Else thou, great King, might'st deem I sung
My deeds with egotistic tongue;
Suffice it that he sank disarmed,
Whilst I above him stood unharmed.

“ Judge, potent King, the scorn I felt
As grovelling at my feet he knelt,
Dreading the blow, my princely steel
In pride and virtue dare not deal.
For why should I the headsman wrong
To whom such recreant slaves belong;
When from your royal breast, great king,
The purest streams of justice spring.
Assured of this—though flushed with strife—
The conqueror gave the conquered life,
That when the keen knife of the headsman descended,
The deed to thy justice and praise might redound;

For honor and virtue are safest defended
By monarchs who rule with such wisdom profound."

He paused—like the Brutus of old—for reply,
As drunkenly hickupped the king—"He shall die!"
Yet heard he not that—for in horror his eye
Dilated in fear, as a voice rose on high,
That seemed to proceed from some speaker close by—
"Foul stabber of courage and virtue—A LIE!!"
All started at once in dismay to their feet—
"Who dared to say that?" yell'd the fierce Catacar.
"I dared!"—quoth a voice from the yet vacant seat;
All looked, and beheld there the Princess Zimar,
Who shrouded her spell with her robe, as they gazed,
Half sobered, dumb stricken, unnerved and amazed.—
In dignity clad, yet indignant withal.
She glanced like a queen at the guests in the hall,
Whose speechless confusion and drunken surprise
All forms of description and language defies.
She glanced at her father, spell-bound to his throne,
And from him, with loathing, to Prince Ferizone.
Then turning her eyes to the end of the board,
They lit up with love for the Knight she adored—

Within whose proud breast, with devotion combined,
She saw her own image in beauty enshrined.

So breathless were all
In that banquetting hall,
That even a tear might be heard, did it fall—
The functions of breathing, of seeing and feeling;
The terror of spirits dumb-stricken revealing—
For sealed up by wonder appeared every sense,
Whilst o'er them, that incubus gloated, Suspense.

Again on her father—
Whose strange agitation
Was heightened the rather,
By her indignation—
She gazed—and scarce noting the fears that oppressed him,
In tender, yet resolute tones, thus addressed him :—
“Yon black hearted traitor, that shrinks by thy side,
A coward, and liar, I boldly proclaim;
And rather than be with such baseness allied,
I'd render up all, save my pure virgin fame.
Far nobler than him is the Knight he belied,—
Though ranked his inferior in station and birth,—
Than is the bright disc of the sun at noontide
To lamps that the glowworm lights upon earth.”

The Prince, ere the speech of the Princess was finished,
 (According to Dickens) "his shadow diminished;"
 And shrank, as do snails when their paths are opposed—
 Or opera glasses, when suddenly closed—
 In short, though a Prince, he appeared on the whole,
 As pigmy in body, as leprous in soul.
 Zimar raised her hand, and the finger that pointed
 The way to the door, seemed by magic anointed—
 So swiftly and stealthily crawled he away,
 Dumbfounded no doubt, by the spells of the Fay.

The King never stirred,
 Nor e'en uttered a word—

He winked not—nor nodded—at all that occurred;
 But wrinkled and sallow reclined on his throne,
 As though he were only a figure of stone.
 His eye-balls were fixed—but his wig was not,
 For that was awry on his head;
 And though in his clutches, no sceptre he'd got,
 A flagon was grasped in its stead.

The courtiers rushed round,
 And in horror profound,
 Shook him, and his flagon, and wig to the ground;

But shaking was vain, and availed not a fig,
For Death calmly lay, 'twixt the flagon and wig.

We'll not for a moment attempt to pourtray,
The anguish and sorrow of lovely Zimar,
As weeping she knelt, by where passively lay
The mortal remains of old King Catacar.
Her tears swiftly fell on the cold pulseless clay,
But warmth it possessed not, to charm them away :
All silent that tongue, and dissevered the breath,
On which late depended, life, freedom, and death ;
Whilst round her the nobles in unision drew,
Their homage preferring, where homage was due.

Bowing the head,

Thrice—slowly they said :

“ The king, he is dead ”—

Then bending their knees, by their liege that had been,
Thrice bowing they hailed her with “ Long live the Queen.”



A year and a day
Calmly glided away,
And everything seemed full of beauty and gay—

Joy beamed in all faces,
 And sorrow's dark traces, [places.
 Had flown—for sweet Hope leagued with Trust filled their
 The load on the people was lighter by far,
 Than when on the throne sat old fierce Catacar,
 Who ruled with the rod—whilst his daughter the Queen,
 Had called up affection, where hatred had been.

Beloved by her subjects, and honored by each,
 She laboured by act, and example to teach;
 Her hand was the foremost to aid in its flight,
 The genius that struggled through darkness to light.
 Her voice was the sweetest to whisper content,
 To those 'neath the weight of adversity bent;
 Her eye was the keenest, where virtue was tried,
 To scare thence the tempter that promised and lied.

For ever by means of her fairy spell
 She judged of a deed by the motive alone,
 And not by the act; for she learned full well
 How deeds may be loathed, when their motives are known.

A year and a day
 We have said, passed away,
 And none than the Queen, were more happy and gay.

A year and a day, and the Knight sat beside her,
She needed his counsel and wisdom to guide her—
She longed for a some one, as mentor and friend
(For mentor, read husband) on whom to depend—
So settled her choice, by consent of her Peers
On Reebee, her lover, and equal in years.

[The dust of a parchment, long rotted away,
Is kept on our publisher's desk every day,
That sceptics may see it, and seeing receive
As truths, all their fancy may please to believe ;
This parchment, or rather its dust that we shew—
Recorded these stories *a long time ago* ;
Nay furthermore mentioned, concerning the Queen
And Reebee, king consort, for such had he been.

“Mem.—He was to her, what the air is to life.”

“Mem.—She was to him, a most excellent wife.”

“Mem.—Truth and affection, in each seemed allied.”

“Mem.—Consort and Queen doubtless lived till they
So ends the report—lofty praise I confess— died.”
And yet 'twould lack truth, did it dare to say less.]

So pass we away from those shadowy days,
When honored were relics and light-footed Fays,

To days, when such stories alone are received
As tales to be smiled at, but never believed.
Yet, friend, ere we part, let us hope that our times
Are purged from the follies here wreathed into rhymes ;
For e'en in our days, many follies there are,
More gross than preceded the reign of Zimar.

END OF FIRST FLIGHT.

FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND.

SECOND FLIGHT.

"THE FAIRY BRIDE, OR GRIGGLEBONE'S HEIR."

I.

GRIGGLEBONE Hall resounds with jests,
For Grigglebone Castle is thronged with guests,
And squat on the dais Count Grigglebone rests.
The Count seems exceedingly testy and heated—
Three times has he yell'd, and thrice curses repeated;
In short he conceived himself scurvily treated,
By those 'neath the roof of his ancestors seated.
They cared not for Grigglebone senior at all,
Though Grigglebone senior was lord of that hall;
'Twas Grigglebone junior they worship'd in stead—
That gentleman having been plighted to wed
A lady descended from Grigglebone's line,
With charms old Grigglebone vow'd were divine,

(But whether young Grigglebone thought her the same,
Was nothing, so long as the Grigglebone name,
Required for transmission a Grigglebone dame),
The scheme by the thrifty old Count was projected,
By him had the bride and her robes been selected.
His guests on the matter looked wise and reflected—
And noticing Grigglebone junior dejected,
They seemed by this Grigglebone junction affected;
Each counselled the youth as a friendly adviser,
Each knew the old Count had through life been a miser;
So each for the rule of the former desired,
Nor cared e'en a dump when the latter expired.
They knew that old Grigglebone must, without doubt,
Soon leave them, moved off by the Grigglebone gout.
Three times had he yelled, as its pangs wildly prey'd
On limbs, in thick swathings of flannel arrayed;
And looked he as though he'd been pickled in salt,
And trussed up to enter the Grigglebone vault.

The feast was ended—the drinking done;
To bed went the revellers one by one,
Determined to rise with the rising sun;
For a boar, with tusks of enormous length,
Denoting alike his fierceness and strength,

In the neighbouring forest had made his lair ;
And every one wished to be stirring, and there,
The sport to enjoy and the glory to share.
Grigglebone junior—But first, if you please,
 We'll call him as christened " Amintor,"
Such capital savings of capital " G's,"
 Must lighten the heart of the printer.
Old—no, I'll not mention his name, but you know
 Who's meant by the prefix of " Old ;"
We'll call him " The Count" through the story, and so
 Pass on to the morning. 'Twas cold,
But bright as a morning could well be in Spring,
 When soaring untrammelled on high,
And warbling whilst soaring, the lark on the wing,
 His matins addressed to the sky.
 Hark ! hark to the hounds
 As they bay through the grounds,
And the huntsman's shrill horn that cheerily sounds.
 How the hunters shout
 As they gallop about,
Their spears ready poised, lest the boar should burst out.
 Amintor is there ;
 But where, and oh where
Is the testy old Count—nay, I mean the *bon pere* ?

Alas ! in the Castle, screwed down to his chair,
Distracted with gout, and half mad with despair,
Because he can't ride with his legs in the air,
And witness a pastime so manly and rare.

He curses and fumes,
When he thinks that his grooms
Can join in the sport he's debarred ; and presumes
To state that " old Job,"
When he tore off his robe,
Bore nothing, whilst he, Atlas-like, bears the globe.
And swears, furthermore,
That though Job was all o'er,
From heels to the crown of his head, one great sore,
'Twas nothing compared
To the tortures he shared,
Thus crippled, and swathed, with his two legs impaired.

" His patience !" all stuff !
He knows that well enough,
Else Job must have been most confoundedly tough ;
What would Job have done if he could not get out,
But had to stay in with no friend but the gout ?
Whilst those he was feasting the evening before
Were shouting, and laughing, and hunting a boar.

K

We'll leave the old petulant gout-worried Count
 To wriggle and splutter his fill—
And ripe for enjoyment our Pegasus mount,
 And canter o'er valley and hill.
Hark! hark! there again; from the midst of the wood
 Arises the pricker's shrill shout;
Re-echoed by hunters and foresters good,
 Who guard every pathway without.
The deep and hoarse baying of strong shaggy hounds
 Ensconced by the brushwood and trees;
In concert with "whoop" and "halloo" o'er the grounds,
 Commingles and swells on the breeze.
A yell, but discordant and fading in cries,
 A moment resounds on the air;
'Tis such as the brave hound sends forth ere he dies,
 And proves that the quarry is there.
Excitement and eagerness sit on each crest—
 Neighs highly each steed, proudly prancing;
The spears of the hunters are nervously pressed,
 For the boar they have sought is advancing.
 Nearer and nearer,
 Louder and clearer,
The shouts rise and swell on the ears of the hearer.

No longer at bay,

The boar breaks away ;

The leashes are slipped, and the dogs track their prey.

Now this boar was a boar in each sense of the word ;

For heedless of death, and the dangers incurred,

Regardless of javelins, arrows and spears,

Through horses and hunters his pathway he steers.

Oh, bravely they stood, and right loudly they cheered ;

But Sanglier seemed—at least so it appeared—

To care not a dump for them all, but to beard,

Or bristle, or tusk him who first interfered.

The gallants still close to each other adhered,

Excited, no doubt, but by no means afraid.

Their horses grew restive, pawed, snorted, and reared,

As right through the midst like a fury he cleared.

Then “ whoop ” and “ halloo ! ”

There’s the devil to do ;

For the boar, like a boar, hath a pathway bored through.

Oh, never before on the Grigglebone grounds

Had any beast bothered so huntsmen and hounds.

A chase ! a chase !

Each struggles for place.

But who is the rider rides first in the race ?

THE HOUND

The hound is at the Count's command

The hound is at the Count's command

The hound is at the Count's command

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arer.

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 'ense of the word ;
 ers incurred,
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 way he steers.
 y they cheered ;
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d roared,

ed

Amintor ! 'tis goodly Amintor, no doubt,
Whose sire yells at home, hunted up by the gout.

II.

The day is done,
And one by one
The huntsmen return from a jolly long run ;
The boar has escaped, and they've missed the fun
Of seeing his death, as they hoped to have done.
But where, and oh where is the old County's son ?
Perhaps at the hall,
Home first of them all,
Or dusting his clothes, having met with a fall.
(That's Irish, but does just as well as a wall ;
For riders in meeting with either don't always
Get over them safely, unless they're true Galways ;
And leaps at a hunt that commence in a rise,
May end on the back, with a view of the skies).
But Diana forbend
That so stunning an end
Should cut short the sporting career of their friend.
Thus musing, old Grigglebone Castle was gained –
When lo ! what a change ! was it real or feigned ?

Each face they observed bore the stamp of dismay—
 Amintor was absent; and late in the day
 The lamp of old Grigglebone, dimmed by the gout,
 Had “phizzed” for a moment, waxed faint, and gone out;
 And all that remained for the lord of that hall
 Was the Grigglebone vault, with the coffin and pall.

The guests seemed dejected;

They said they respected

The good old defunct, and some dinner expected.
 But no, they got none! there was no one to wait
 At table, and keep a sharp eye on the plate.
 So homewards they toddled, vexed, hungry, and sore,
 Choused out of their dinner, their host, and the boar.

Now seek we Amintor! oh where, and oh where
 Is that sporting your gallant, the Grigglebone heir?
 His servants have scoured half the country around;
 His horse they recovered, and likewise they found
 The boar lying dead by the side of a hound,
 And ’twixt them their lord’s bloody spear on the ground.

Much blood had been shed,

For the turf was quite red,

But whether the Count’s or the brute’s no one said;

But horror ! the vest
In which he was dressed
Lay close by the boar, with a rent in the breast.
They raised it, and bore it away to the hall,
And gave it a place by the coffin and pall.

Weeks passed ; but, alas ! no Amintor returned ,
So then, as his proxy, the vest,
By the Count in the Grigglebone vault was inurned,
Consigned to perpetual rest.
Of course they concluded him dead, and their sadness
For months in their clothes might be traced ;
But not in their faces, for there mirth and gladness
The signets of anguish effaced.
The fair bride elect said she felt broken-hearted ;—
But joy all such sorrow succeeds ;
She wept a few tears for her lover departed,
Then asked “how she looked in her weeds ?”
Oh friendship ! oh man ! and ’tis thus with ye ever,
Time-servers ye always have proved ;
Words, absence, or death, in a moment may sever
Fond hearts from the hearts they have loved.
E’en Kindred, though highly in life ye may rate ’em,
When confined, are lost in a sigh ;

A month, nay a day ! *vanitas vanitatum*,
The eyes of survivors are dry.

For the sake of formality,
Let us ask why rascality
Walks amongst men in the garb of morality ?
Does any man doubt it,
Or say we're without it ?
If so, be assured he knows something about it ;
For show me the place
Where such is not the case :
The parasite's cringe, and the pharisee's face,
Reveal all that's hollow, unholy, and base.
And—but that it oftentimes escapes due detection—
Rascality lurks in the smile of affection ;
Nay, further, 'neath sympathy's pinions it lies
(For rascals can soothe, and make pumps of their eyes).
Oh mockery ! sinfulness ! emptiness all !
Like the sorrow in black at old Grigglebone Hall.

The reader will own
That since scribes first were known,
One glorious prerogative shared they alone—

And that was their right
To bring actions to light,
That otherwise must have been hidden from sight.
Availing myself of that right, I shall trace
The course of Amintor the day of the race ;
And those who assist me the wold to explore
Shall witness his fate, and the death of the boar.

III.

Away on his courser, as swift as the wind,
Or shaft that is loosed from the bow,
Amintor sped, leaving his comrades behind,
His spear ready poised for a blow.

But tangles and thickets at times intervened,
And shut out the quarry from view,
The which he passed round, whilst the underwood screened
The hounds that on scent struggled through.

Thus lonely he rode, as the hours slipped away,
Till noon; when, within a rude glen,
The boar, tired and savage, stood fiercely at bay,
His keen foes confronting again.

Then woe to the hound that too closely approached
The tusks that in crimson were dyed ;
The first that within the dread precincts encroached,
Enseamed, fell a corpse by his side.

When Sanglier saw that a huntsman was near,
Upon him he rushed with a bound :—
Amintor received the rude shock on his spear,
And pinioned him fast to the ground.

Then leaped to the earth, and bent over the boar,
Which, with the last strength it possessed,
Sprang upwards, expiring, and, reeking with gore,
Sheathed both its red tusks in his breast.

Amintor fell backwards the wounds were severe ;
Each sense, like a coward, took flight :
A moment he fancied some angel was near,
Then faded thought, feeling, and sight.

His life-blood flowed swiftly, imbruing the earth ;
His heart became pulseless and still'd ;
There helpless he lay, as a babe at its birth,
Or the foe he had recently kill'd.

IV.

And thus Count Amintor, the boar, and the hound,
Lay peacefully stretched on the crimson-dyed ground.
A king, when a pauper is placed by his side —
Each stripped of the emblems of meekness and pride,
The rags and the wallet, the robes and the crown,
The cravings of want, or the glare of renown—
Is troubled no more by a sense of disgust,
Or the mingling with his of the mendicant's dust,
Than was our bold huntsman, when resting between
The brutes on the red grass, that lately was green.

But who is she who bends o'er him now,
Washing the gore from his bosom and brow ;
Stanching the blood that still runs from his breast ;
Removing with care his incarnadined vest ;
Healing his wounds by some magical art ;
Recalling pulsation once more to his heart ;
Beaming upon him with looks of love ;
Bearing him thence through the sylvan grove,
As though he were only a sleeping child,
And she the fond mother that watched and smiled ?

Who, then, is she ?

What can she be,

That raises the hunter so tenderly ?
Light appeared he to those arms so fair,
As feathers of down to the tenants of air;
And less 'neath the burthen that lady bowed
Than the breeze that sports with a fleecy cloud.
What is she ? Whence comes she ? Who can she be ?
She is a Fairy of high degree ;
And thither she comes from her fragrant bowers,
For Flo' is the Fairy perfumes the flowers.

Hours passed, and when twilight, with gossamer veil,
 'Twixt heaven and earth interposed,
Amintor awoke in a cool shady dale,
 By flowrets the rarest enclosed.

He started, surprised, from a couch of fresh leaves,
 More smooth than e'er Sybarite pressed ;
Whilst o'er him the eglantine playfully weaves
 Its tendrils, to woo him to rest.

Around him he heard airy music, so fine,
 So soft, yet bewitchingly clear ;
He thought, whilst he listened, the strains were divine—
 Their melodies ravished his ear.

Beside him was one so transcendantly bright,
So fair, that he deemed he had past
From earth to the regions of glory and light,
To mingle with angels at last.

She smiled, as he gazed on her beautiful face,
Calm, pure, and enchantingly sweet ;
But oh ! 'twas a smile of such exquisite grace,
He worshipping knelt at her feet.

“Not there, Count Amintor !”—he started, amazed—
All music seemed harsh to her tone,
As gently the awe-stricken gallant she raised—
“The knee is for worship alone !”

“Fair spirit,” he said, “I some hours ago died ;
It happened whilst slaying a boar.”
“Nay, nay,” quoth the fairy, “I stood by your side,
And called you to being once more !”

“And have I not passed, then, from earth into bliss ?”
“Not yet, sweet Amintor,” sighed she.
“Nay,” answered he, boldly, “a heaven is this ;
It must be such, angel, with thee.”

"No angel am I," quoth the Fairy. "Yet know
 That potent are some of my powers."
 "Your name, charming creature?" he asked. "Call me
 For I am the Queen of the Flowers." [Flo',

Blooms Love within the sylvan grot,
 Or fairy bower—the rogue does not—
 At least as sung by Walter Scott.
 "Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
 And men below, and saints above—
 For Love is Heav'n, and Heav'n is Love."
 He speaks of camps, and groves, and courts,
 But does not say that Love consorts
 With such a nymph as I have shown,
 Or gallant like young Grigglebone.
 Yet stay—methinks that Shakspeare's pen
 Has writ of love 'twixt fays and men.
 The Queen Titania, he has said,
 Loved Bottom, with the asses head;
 And kissed his ears, and stroked his pate,
 And shared with him her couch of state.
 With such a precedent, I ween,
 I need not fear the critic's spleen;

For if they blame me, he must share
A portion of the blame I bear.

Amintor was loved by the Queen of the Flowers ;
Her love he returned, and thus past their hours,
In tranquil and blissful repose.

In time they were wedded, but not as we wed ;
Their priest was the Lily, their altar its bed ;
Their witness the Ivy, that clinging o'erhead,
Its tendrils in token of faithfulness spread—
They wedded were—*under the Rose.*

And then was he, told, by his beautiful bride,
His life should in one stream of happiness glide,
Untouched by the fingers of Time ;
That youth should be his, whilst he faithful remained ;
But if for a moment his honour were stained,
That moment (so had it by fate been ordained)
The powers of the spoiler should all be regained—
Whilst he paid the forfeit of crime.

He winced as she spoke, for he could not conceive
Her reasons for hinting at doubt,

"The forfeit of crime," he had cause to believe
 Must be the old Grigglebone gout.
 Thus months past away ;
 And day after day
 Amintor became more in love with his Fay.
 Delighted, he hung
 On the music that sprung
 In harmony sweet from her eloquent tongue :
 The lute of Arion less dulcet in sound
 Than the silvery notes it winged lightly around.
 E'en Echo delighted those tones to prolong,
 And ravished the glades as she wreathed them in song.
 Whatever he sought,
 By enchantment was brought,
 Ere language had power to give semblance to thought.
 No lackeys were there
 His injunctions to bear ;
 The slaves of that bower were the spirits of air ;
 Unseen by his eyes, they obeyed each behest,
 Heaped fruits on his table, or lulled him to rest.
 His beautiful bride
 Ever watched by his side,
 To cheer or caress him—but never to chide ;

To smile in his face
With an exquisite grace,
Known only to those of her own airy race;
Or else her clear arms round his figure to twine,
Like tendrils spread forth by the close-clinging vine,
As she hung on his lips, or looked love from those eyes,
Whose softness might rival the tints of the skies,
When cloudless and calm as an evening in May,
Their azure tints blend with the glories of day.

The reader, perchance,
May believe I advance
Not facts—but the nothings of wanton romance.
Some belle, or some beau,
May say wisely—"I know
This tale is all "*gammon*" respecting sweet Flo'.
No woman—especially were she a wife—
Could live and be happy, excluded from strife.
As well might it state that she lived without air,
As those *petite* squabbles so loved by the fair."
I grant that, of course, where the lady is human;
But Flo', recollect, was a fay—not a woman.
She ne'er cross'd her lord—ne'er his wishes opposed,
Nor lectured him once, when the curtains were closed.

Oh ! could I meet one like to her, I protest,
 The sweetheart of Psyche should rule in my breast :
 His wings I'd decline, but his arrows I'd borrow—
 I'd woo her to-day, and I'd wed her to-morrow.
 I'd seek not the fire that Prometheus attempted
 To steal,—when his wish the wise gods circumvented—
 To light up a figure I chiselled from stone,
 If such as sweet Flo' I might clasp as my own.

But query—Did ever

Amintor endeavour

His soul from his fairy a moment to sever ?

He did, once or twice ;

But each specious device

By Flo' was discovered, and spoiled in a trice :
 For even his thoughts to that lady were known—
 She read them unuttered, as plain as her own ;
 And when she perceived that a wish was estranged,
 She kissed him, and, *presto*, the subject was changed.

Oh ! ye who have husbands with fancies to free,
 Object not at first to a casual spree ;
 Nor grumble at hours—"and that cursed latch-key."
 Try kindness and coaxings (at least for a-while)—
 There's majic, believe me, wreathed up in a smile.

L

For life—wedded life—might be cradled in bliss,
If tongues were not used, till the lips gave a kiss.
Love's kisses and smiles are to men, led astray,
What stars are to midnight, or sunshine to day.
They play round the heart with a beauty that warms ;
Whilst frowns and revilings enshroud it in storms.
Revilings and frowns are dark goblins of night,
But kisses and smiles are pure angels of light,
Oh ! give us the angels, sweet women, and then
You'll find what good creatures you've made of the men.

His thoughts, I have stated,
Flo' read—each was weighted
With love for herself not a tittle abated.
The worst of those wishes was but for permission
To leave that sweet arbour, by her made elysian,
Just for a week,
In order to seek
The lady whose breath should have danced on his cheek,
And by some sly method attempt to discover
How long she had wept for her fly-away lover.
Yet that was not all:
He panted to call
At the home of his childhood, Old Grigglebone Hall—

To feast on the music that lived in the shout
From Grigglebone wrenched by the Grigglebone gout.

He knew not, alas! that his father was dead,
Nor dreamed that a cousin was Count in his stead;
Nor yet, that his friend had assigned him some room
(Or rather his vest) in the Grigglebone tomb;
Erecting a tablet, on which had been graved
The death he had died, and the boar he had braved.
While set at each side were two naked winged boys,
With trumpets, like half-penny infantine toys:
Betwixt them, a scroll, neatly chiselled, they bore,
And on it "hic jacet," and many things more
Set forth in good Latin—name, virtues, and age,
In capitals wrought, every eye to engage;
Whilst, set on a slab at the base of the scroll,
"Orâte, pro animâ" ended the whole.

Flo' knew that the Count had expired of the gout,
The day that the boar knocked Amintor about:
Yet kept she the secret wrapped up from her spouse,
Which ne'er could have been, were she partial to rows.
This fact proves my statement, I trust, beyond doubt;
For were she a woman, the secret must out.

V.

One morning she told him, she feared that his mind
Oft wandered away from her bowers,
So wished him to visit his home; whilst behind
She stayed, like Penelope—sad, yet resigned;
Or in thought like the love-lorn Viola, pined,
Still counting the slow-creeping hours.

She gave him a chain that on earth had no fellow
Endowed with more magical powers
Than the handkerchief given by sooty Othello
To chaste Desdemona. 'Twas gold, rich and yellow,
And warranted love for strange faces to quell. Oh!
'Twas wrought for the Queen of the Flowers.

She charged him, as round him the token she strung,
To prize it as though 'twere his life;
And told him that whilst on his bosom it hung,
'Twould guard him from Slander's malevolent tongue—
Preserve his faith plighted those flowrets among,
And keep him aye true to his wife.

But if he through negligence cast it aside,
Or lost it, or gave it away,
One year from that time she would stand by his side,

(As once did Alonzo the Brave by his bride,
Excepting that he had a death's head to hide),
To punish his perfidy, lower his pride,
To teach him the hate of a fay.

They had sat "tête-à-tête,"
Till she touched upon "Hate"—
That word the most dread in the dark book of Fate;
But when it was spoken,
He shrank from the token,
As though his troth plighted already were broken,
And turned away with a feeling of dread,
Releasing her waist, and averting his head.
That word, though it faltered at birth on her tongue,
Changed Love's rosy wreathes into serpents that stung;
Made heavy the bonds (hitherto deemed so light),
As fetters degrading to manhood and might;
Seared up all affection and trust in its fall,
And turned life's sweets into hyssop and gall.
But paint me her eyes,
As they glared with surprise
And meaning, that every description defies.
She noticed him wince as she spoke of the charm,
Perused all he felt of disgust and alarm,

And felt she no longer was clasped by his arm.
Oh ! paint me that look, with her lip as it curl'd
In jealousy, pity, and scorn,
And then Clytemnestra shall gaze on the world,
The offspring of genius new-born.

The monster Iago describes as green-eyed,
That feeds on the meat it has made ;
On Flo', though a fairy, its subtleties tried,
And Flo', though a fairy, obeyed.
Farewell, then, for her !—oh ! for ever farewell
Content, and the sweet tranquil mind ;
Farewell to the peace that pervaded that dell—
'Twas flown, and left anguish behind ;
Farewell to the rambles when soft twilight fell—
To wooings, and love's conversation ;
And oh ! Count Amintor, for ever farewell—
For gone is your Flo's occupation.

VI.

Amintor departed,
By no means light-hearted—

He felt rather queer at the news just imparted ;
And looked on the chain Flo' had clasped round his neck
As a curb only set there to hold him in check.
So, firmly resolved, at the first opportunity,
To cast it aside, and brave Fate with impunity.
Yet ever, when thoughts of that kind struggled out,
He winced 'neath a twinge of the ancestral gout :
Thus feeling, and thinking, and cursing his thrall,
He entered the portals of Grigglebone Hall.

We'll pass his reception—the fear—the surprise
He saw conjured up in the servitor's eyes ;
The sorrow displayed by his legal successor,
Who looked on himself as the Castle's possessor,
When he found that his near, dear relation returned
To life ; though all deemed him securely inurned
In a coffin of wood—in a coffin of lead—
In a coffin of stone—in the vault, and quite dead.
Three coffins—the lead one inside of the stone,
The wood in the lead—with the vest so well known ;
And carved in the church, saying, " Pray for his soul,"
The naked winged cherubim bearing the scroll.

For a while he gazed

On Amintor, amazed,

And some curious objections most likely had raised;
But he knew what he saw was no idle creation
Besides, in those eyes he beheld speculation—
(Such was not the case, where, when “done to the death,”
A visit by Banquo was paid to Macbeth):
So, leaving his seat, he said—“Sir, I resign
Those halls to the head of the Grigglebone line;
And you are that head, for the Count was no more
When hither we came, having hunted the boar,
That day which commenced in so jolly a run,
And closed with the loss both of father and son.’

VII.

Days passed away
Blithesome and gay,
And Amintor at last broke the spell of the fay:
He cast off the chain
She desired might remain
On his breast, and his honour preserve from all stain;
And sought out the bride,
Who for half-an-hour cried,
Then asked “how she looked in her weeds?” when he died

(Or rather, when surmise was lulled into rest
By proof of his death, the incarnadined vest).
He found her—alas ! she had wedded another,
Yet strange to report, was a widow and mother ;
So short was her period of sorrow, I ween,
And light must her love for Amintor have been.

Oh ! woman, your sex has been ever the same,
And Frailty, as Hamlet observed, is your name.
You'd all fly away, fickle, credulous things,
Had Heaven but made you, like angels, with wings.
But no—it was wise, and assigned you a station,
The next upon earth to its lords of creation—
Their coaxers or teasers, their sweethearts or mates,
To love them, or leave them, as fancy dictates.

Of shriekings, of faintings, of weepings, and dread,
Take all that can well be conceived by one head ;
Then add of coy whimperings thrice that amount,
And guess how the widow encountered the Count.
Forgive me for taxing your fancies thus far,
But readers and writers should be on a par ;
So what by the latter cannot be express'd
Should be by the former in courtesy guess'd.

I could not explain,
Without causing some pain,
The tempests of sighs and tear-torrents of rain
That welcomed Amintor, her suitor, again.
Had she been a maid,
"Of her own voice afraid,"
In blushes and innocence sweetly arrayed,
Like Hinda—ere Hafid the Gheber displayed
The belt that proclaimed him a foe to her sire,
And showed that he worshipped at altars of fire—
(See Moore's "Lala Rookh"), why it might be attempted;
But she was a widow, and such are exempted
By every known rule from these soul-moving parts,
Where virgins, as heroines, plead to young hearts.
Most authors object to a love second-hand ;
First-love should be trust and devotion ;
The second, still water, that hides a quicksand,
Deceitful, and ripe for commotion :
O'er which, when wild tempests are caged, at full tide,
The wave stemming vessels may fearlessly ride ;
But once stirr'd to wrath, rears its huge snowy crest,
Confounds, overthrows, and—imagine the rest.
Sweet, delicate Flo' !
How base is your beau

To flirt with the widow, and cozen you so ;
 To cast off the chain
 You desired him retain,
 And forget what he vowed 'neath the Rose to remain.
 Put law in full force,
 'Tis your only safe course—
 Indict him for bigamy, sue for divorce ;
 For he to the widow affection has plighted,
 Her weeds are thrown by, and they twain are united,
 Whilst you were not e'en to their bridal invited.
 Oh ! why did you not, when the banns were proclaimed—
 For licenses then were unknown—
 Confront him ? for surely you were not ashamed
 To claim him in church as your own.
 Oh ! why did you not ?—but the sequel must show
 Your reasons for standing aloof, pretty Flo'.
 Perchance, since you proved him no longer a true man,
 You handed him o'er to the care of a woman :
 That woman a widow, whose love, like her sorrow,
 Might bloom on the eve, and yet blight on the morrow.
 Oh ! fairy, you had not a touch of humanity,
 Or else you had kept him, if only for vanity.
 'Twas cruel to cast him away, when your charms
 Could bring him repenting again to your arms.

VIII.

Amintor now sits in the Grigglebone chair
 (His lady her chamber is keeping) ;
Friends, kinsmen, retainers, and vassals are there,
His castle to honour, his bounty to share,
Each hourly expecting a Grigglebone heir,
 As slowly the moments are creeping.

Amintor arose—" Fill your goblets," he cried,
 " And pledge me in bumpers o'erflowing,
Long life to the Countess, my lady and bride,
With whom I in love and chaste wedlock abide,
To whom ye in honour or blood are allied—
 Pledge deeply, the wine-cups are glowing."

The goblets, save only Amintor's, w're drained,
 And his, with disgust, he rejected ;
The liquor no taste of the grape-juice retained,
'Twas bitter as aloes, with lees darkly stained.
Rank poison, no doubt! He stood puzzled and pained,
 For no one was near he suspected.

He called for another—'twas brought in due course—
 Again from the goblet he started ;

The first draught was foul, but the second was worse,
 When, hark ! in his ear—" All the gold in thy purse
 Can ne'er free the Grigglebone heir from my curse—
 'Tis twelve months to-day since we parted."

He sprung to his feet, and gave vent to a shout
 That would not disgrace Tipperary,
 Where sticks play at nine-pins with heads—beyond doubt
 'Twas wrung from his heart by the Grigglebone gout,
 As wildly it sported his ancles about,
 Whilst thus spoke its donor, the Fairy :—

" Amintor, last Count of the Grigglebone line—
 For with thee the title expires—
 Nay, hope not for heirs ; no male offspring of thine
 Shall e'er in the annals of chivalry shine ;
 Thy touch shall to vinegar alter all wine ;
 And as a sharp punishment, meet and condign,
 Be thine the fell plague of thy sires.

" The gout shall cling to thee, and still through thy life
 Be thine all the pains of a martyr ;
 Thy home shall be harass'd with family strife ;
 Thy servants shall ever for plunder be rife ;

And last, yet not least, Count Amintor, thy wife
Will prove to thy cost she's a Tartar.

"The doom is recorded ; implacable Hate
Around thee its meshes has spread :
Live on but in torments, the football of Fate,
Abhorred by the poor, and despised by the great.
But hark ! here a messenger comes from thy mate,
To tell thee—the infant is dead."

So saying, the fairy dissolved into breath,
Or made herself "air," like the hags in Macbeth ;
Whilst, crippled with pains from his toes to his knees,
Amintor sat down, not at all at his ease,
And heard from the leech what the fay told before—
"His lady was safe, but the child was no more."

Perchance our Museum the tablets may hold ;
On which the great Grigglebone names are enrolled ;
If so, at the foot of the rest you may read
The lot of our hero, as Fate had decreed.
'Tis thus, but in Latin—"This stone holds in trust
The last Count of Grigglebone's pulverised dust ;
His name was 'Amintor,' a martyr through life,
Who died of two torments—the Gout and his Wife."

FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND.

THIRD FLIGHT.

THE FAIRY QUEEN, OR, THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

In the year—but no matter, we'll not mind the year,
So "Once on a time" is sufficient—
There lived at—we need not the whereabouts here;
My readers have brains that are lively and clear,
So whilst to the story I closely adhere
They'll kindly supply what's deficient.

Most writers of fiction, I'm sorry to state,—
For reasons, or haply without them,—
Have worked on a very bad groundwork of late,
By sketching localities, giving a date,
Thus entering as 'twere, the arena with Fate,
And forcing their readers to doubt them.

Why not act like those who have written before,
Commencing with "Once on a time?"
The generous public would like them the more:
Skip less of their chapters, and only pass o'er
Those pages where authors endeavour to soar,
Through nonsense, *beyond* the sublime.

"'Tis true 'tis a pity, and pity 'tis true,"
(So some one said somewhere before me),
That quill-drivers can't be content with their cue,
That scribblers must ever attempt something new,
That I have not got something better to do
Than opening my flight with a kind of review—
Sweet muse, be propitious, restore me!

Once on a time—I wont say when—
Aroint thee, witch! my new-made pen
Was striving to digress again—
There lived within a shady glen,
Some distance from the haunts of men
(Where strangers came but now and then),
A widow who had passed her prime,
And on whose brow were thickly cast
Those searing finger-marks of Time
That link the Present to the Past.

Bed-ridden, old, decrepid, blind,
 She lay, whilst dreary years passed by,
 For ever patient and resigned,
 Her only fixed desire—to die.

She had two daughters—one was fair,
 With sunny smiles, and golden hair;
 Lips such as heavenly Houri wear;
 Cheeks dimpled, and of eyes a pair
 Gazelle like, and undimm'd by care;
 Her tapering, snow-white neck was bare;
 Her form tho' rather plump than spare,
 Unfolded beauties rich and rare;
 And moved she with a sylph-like air,
 The "Lily of the Valley" there,

The name of the elegant creature was Anne,
 Whose charms I've just been inditing;
 I've failed in my task, so conceive, if you can,
 The damsel of whom I've been writing.

Now Anne, though of sweetness unequal'd possess'd,
 Was humble, obliging, and kind;
 And beauties with which her sweet figure was dress'd
 Were poor when compared to her mind.

M

In tending the widow, an exquisite grace
Was shed, like a halo, above her ;
And oh ! who could gaze on her amiable face,
Nor feel that to see was to love her,

If heaven with earth be connected—if blent
Is aught that's divine with things human ;
Or if amongst mortals an angel be sent—
Oh ! seek we not each in a Woman,

Her soul—if the temple of virtue and love—
Her heart—if with innocence crowned—
Are emblems of all that we hope for above,
Where peace and pure pleasures abound.

And if in one frame every beauty was set,
Since woman first smiled upon man,
I beg that my readers will never forget
Her name, without question, was "Anne."

Her sister—but hold !
I can never unfold
The depths of her heart, 'twas so callous and cold ;

To her shame be it told
 She was spiteful and bold,
 As Sycorax, Caliban's mother, of old.

Her head
 Was red,

Or rather her hair,

If you saw her you could not help saying a prayer,
 Her swivel-eyes cast forth so fiendish a glare.

She was stunted in growth,
 And very much given to scolding and sloth—
 In fact, she was somewhat too fond of them both.

Her sister she hated,
 And constantly prated

Of "people with airs who were much over-rated ;"
 Sweet Anne was so horribly badgered and baited,
 That had she no mother who needed her care,
 She'd run from the Gorgon, regardless of where,
 So near was she pushed to the verge of despair.

Miss Betty, the shrew,
 Most undoubtedly knew

The widow loved Anne far the best of the two,
 (And so, I am sure, courteous reader, would you).

She was also aware

That when sportsmen passed there,
 They preferred golden ringlets to carrotty hair.

Now Anne's curled tresses seemed only a maze,
Within which, when captured, the sun's brightest rays
Delighted to sport, through the long summer days ;
Whilst Betty's coarse head-piece was always arrayed
In elf-locks of somewhat incarnadined shade.
The colour was that of a torch in a fog,
Or "Will-o'-the-wisp," seen through mists on a bog ;
Or, rather (as round her in tangles they coiled,
For, would you believe it ? they never were oiled,
But always looked matted, untidy, and soiled),
Like shells of the lobster, unskilfully boiled.

The widow had only one comfort to cheer her,
And that was sweet Nancy, her daughter,
And Nancy was always delighted when near her,
Distilling her barley-and-water.

Miss Betty, or Sycorax (what's in a name ?—
One suits quite as well as the other),
Whene'er she abused pretty Anne, cast the blame
On her looks, or the bed-ridden mother.

As Anne could not scold, and remonstrance was vain,
Her only relief was in crying ;

Then dew-drops of anguish and love fell like rain
On the couch where the widow was lying.

Thus days swelled to months, and months ended in years,
Each hour bringing sorrows in plenty;
Diversified ever by snubbings and tears,
Till Anne, was a woman and twenty.

And then died the widow (whilst Anne roamed about,
A victim to grief and amazement);
She died—but in peace—"as a lamp is blown out
By a gust of wind at a casement."

(I quote from Longfellow, where Gabriel dies,
Beside him Evangeline kneeling;
I mention my author lest cavillers rise
To charge me with picking and stealing.)

The widow was buried, and Anne left alone,
Though Betty was ever beside her—
Alas! not for sorrows gone by to atone,
But only to taunt and deride her.

One day Anne was sitting
Beneath the porch knitting,—

Whilst Betty a dress o'er her huge back was fitting—

And thinking and grieving,

Determined on leaving

The valley she loved, and some future plans weaving,

When an old woman entered the porch and sat down,

Whose wardrobe consisted of one tattered gown.

She seemed very weak,

And in striving to speak

The action collapsed her thin, time-worn cheek—

'Twas dry as a mummy's, and almost as brown.

Anne gazed on her face,

Whilst bright tears flowed apace,

For nought but mutation those lines could erase;

She thought on her mother, then pulseless and dead,

For thus had her features been wrinkled,

And sighed as she thought, for the hair on her head

Was also with silver besprinkled.

The old woman blessed her,

And would have caressed her,

But thus in her soft dulcet tones Anne addressed her:

"I love silver hairs,

They are emblems of cares,

The snow-flakes that age in its infancy wears—

For the old are twice infants, and honour is theirs.

On your brow rests sublime
 Those deep furrows, which Time
 Delves deeply, as vouchers of virtue or crime ;
 But crime bears a chronicle harsher than yours,
 Like the brand set on Cain, it for ages endures ;
 Its traces are restless, and never serene,
 But yours are as calm as my mother's have been.
 She bore them for years—for her sake, honoured dame,
 I ask you to give your requirements a name ;
 Though lowly my lot, and though scanty my store,
 The old shall not pass unrelieved from my door.

Just then Sycorax,
 With tongue saucy and lax,
 And bold as are duns, for unpaid income-tax,
 (They're bold, for they bore with the law at their backs)
 Stepped into the porch, and commenced—"Filthy hag,
 Move on, or I'll not on your bones leave a rag—
 Up!—up! hoary trollop—be off with your bag."
 "Oh, Betty!" said Anne, still in tears, "she is old,
 Weak, sickly—nay more, perhaps hungry and cold ;
 She asks but for shelter—I'll lend her my bed,
 Oh! look! Betty, look, at her poor palsied head ;

Remember our mother, and let her pass in :
The priest says that charity wipes away sin."

As a shriek on a hill,
When all nature is still,
Or a cry from the throat of the wild whip-poor-will,
Rose Betty's loud voice, ever piercing and shrill,
Though now like old Lear she would gladly "kill, kill."
"What—impudent jade !
You may well look afraid,
Especially after the speech you've just made.
Hey ! lend her your bed—
Would not mine do instead,
With pillows of down for 'her poor palsied head ?
Away, tawny witch,
Or, I swear in some ditch
I'll find you a bed, with a nightcap of pitch—
Begone, wrinkled thief
You'll get no relief,
Not even from her who seems sinking with grief.
I'd dance with delight
If I saw you fixed tight,
Encircled with tar-barrels, blazing and bright.

I'd laugh when you cried,
 For I'd stand by your side,
 Old trollop and yell, as in tortures you died.
 So saying, she pushed the poor soul from her seat,
 Who tottered, and sank with a groan at her feet.
 "Oh, Betty, for shame!" was all Nancy could say,
 As Sycorax stalked like a fishwife away,
 Who battled at Billingsgate, gaining the day.

 'Then Anne, like an angel of mercy, knelt down
 By the woman so mummy-like, wrinkled, and brown.
 Her head she prest
 To her own pure breast,
 As though 'twere a dove, and her bosom its nest.
 'The sorrow and pity that shone through her eyes,
 'The power of the poet and painter defies:
 Let those who would picture that glance, draw a bill
 On fancy, but not upon me or my quill.

 She breathed in her ear
 Words of comfort and cheer,
 Like honey they flowed, for sweet Anne was sincere.
 Oh, Sympathy! what upon earth is so dear?
 What music so dulcet—what language so clear?
 Thine altar the spirit—its incense a tear.

"Oh, mother!" she cried, in tones soothing and mild,
"I'm young—but on you years of sorrow are piled;
Be thou but my mother, let me be your child.

We'll wander away from the cruel and vile,
United like seraphs above;
I'm orphan'd and ever shall feast on your smile,
I long to have something to love."

The old woman's features were lit up a-space,
Her ears had heard all that was uttered;
And dimples of gladness careered o'er her face,
As slowly and softly she muttered:—

"Yes, come with me,
And I shall be
More than thy mother was to thee.
Oh! come where the simple daisies bloom,
And gladden the sense with their sweet perfume;
For the good, like thee, we have always room.
There—free! free!
'Neath the birchin tree,
Thy thoughts shall gambol merrily;
And the glowworm's lamp shall lend thee light,
And the bee, with its busy hum,

Shall lead thee forth where the sun shines bright,
And the rarest flowers enchant the sight;
Where day is day—but they know not night—
For their hours are spent in pure delight.

Then come with the Fairy, come!"
So saying, she kissed the maiden's eyes;
And Anne beheld, with a wild surprise,
Not a wrinkled hag in tatters bound,
But a lovely female, robed and crown'd.
Pure eyes of love on her features beam'd—
Eyes she had seen when she slept and dream'd,
The face was the fairest she e'er had seen,
And that face was the face of the FAIRY QUEEN.

Anne silently gazed,
Spell-bound and amazed,
On the creature whose old palsied head she had raised;
In short, she suspected her wits to be crazed.

The wrinkles were gone,
And her features put on
A sweetness that sooth'd, whilst it brilliantly shone,
So peach-like the cheeks, late so hollow and wan.
Her elegant neck,
Free from blemish and speck,

Bore charms that might e'en a Venus bedeck.
Adown it descended
Jet ringlets, that blended
With beauties a Paris himself had commended.
Her forehead was high,
Giving depth to an eye,
Or eyes—they were plural—of ebony dye,
That sparkled like gems Cynthia sets in the sky;
Though black as the night,
They emitted such light,
That whate'er they looked on grew dazzlingly bright.
Her lips bore the hue
Of a rose dipped in dew,
Or well-ripened cherries, the juice oozing through.
Around her slight zone pass'd a circlet of gold;
Above it, a bust of such exquisite mould,
That thought ne'er conceived, nor can language unfold,
The beauties that Anne was constrained to behold.
Beneath it were limbs with such symmetry framed,
That near them the Graces themselves might be shamed—
The Empress of Egypt retire from the scene,
And Anthony leave for a Fairy a Queen.

Now reader, dear,
A word in your ear,
I feel it my duty to speak it here.

Mistake me not; 'twill elsewhere be found
That the lady I write of was "robed and crown'd."
I would not for worlds that any man thought
A particle less of my nymph than he ought;
For less he must think, if I said she stood
Like those chubby-faced cherubim carved in wood;
Or the sculptured figure of sylph-like Greek;
Or worse—far worse!—like a pose plastique.
Oh! no; she was modest, yet richly drest
In an ample kirtle and broidered vest;
Her ankles (confess it I must, I suppose)
Were bare, for she wore neither garters nor hose;
But as she was fashioned, she needed not those,
For the tiniest slippers embraced her toes.

She raised her wand, for you understand
That fairies have always a wand in the hand;
I've seen them myself, from time to time,
In the "Midsummer's Dream," or a Pantomime;
And ne'er saw I one on the stage, or on high,
Suspended by strings from the calico sky,
But with her she carried a gingerbread stick,
Like the mace of the City, but hardly so thick;
The which when she waved, every monster gave way,
Patched Clowns were created, and Pantaloons grey;

Columbines fluttered with Harlequins round,
And Sprites tumbled head-over-heels on the ground,
Till the last wave of all put an end to the joke,
Commencing in fireworks, and ending in smoke.

She raised her wand, as I formerly stated,
And Anne in a moment was drest
As rich as an empress but newly created,
For everything seemed of the best,
Just then Betty came, with Medusa-like head,
To see if the hag had recovered;
But judge her amazement when there, in her stead,
The Fairy and Anne she discovered.

"You said," quoth the Fairy, "that time-honoured age
Might starve ere you'd give it relief;
You vented on me all your passionate rage;
You called me "witch," "trollop," and "thief;"
You said, furthermore, if I wanted to rest—
Whilst silent your anger I bore—
That ditches would suit my old palsied head best,
And you pushed me away from your door.
'Mid tar-barrels fastened, you also desired
To see me, and stand by my side;

To laugh, as the fragments around me were fired,
And yell, whilst in tortures I died.

Now listen to me—all you wished I might bear,
On you shall be acted fourfold."

So saying, she lifted her wand in the air,
And Betty grew instantly old.

Weak, haggard, and wan, with a horrible stare,
And limbs that refused her their aid, [hair
She quaked where she stood, whilst her coarse matted
Assumed a more carrotty shade.

Repulsive her look, as she bowed to the spell,
And hobbled away on a crutch ;
The ugliest angel of darkness that fell,
Would shrink with disgust from her touch.

Then vanished the cottage away from the glen,
And vanished sweet Anne from the scene,
And nothing is left, save these fruits of my pen,
To tell that such changes have been.

Still day after day, bent with palsy and years,
And hated, because she's a thief,
An old wrinkled hag pleads, with groanings and tears,
For alms, but can get no relief.

That hag, lovely reader, may call on you yet,
And ask for some favour or other;
If so, pass her by, and oh ! never forget
How harshly she dealt with her mother.

But Anne ! Have you ever met Anne ? Her delight
Is to wander by woodlands and streams ;
Or else to pay visits to lovers at night,
And paint all they wish in their dreams.

She's modest, and flies from the slumberer's bed,
Whose thoughts have not virtue to guide them ;
But where all is pure, there her magic is spread,
And softly she nestles beside them.

Farewell, then ! and if you with Love are opprest,
Take courage, for Fortune may rally—
And know, that the Fairy who watches your rest,
Is "The Lily that bloomed in the Valley."

FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND.

FOURTH FLIGHT.

THE FAIRIES' REVEL; OR, THE CHILD OF EARTH.

IN traditions of eld, we have often beheld
Quaint phrases, and strangeness of diction;
The scribes too delighting in constantly writing
As facts, what they knew to be fiction.

IN every tradition we find superstition
The principal filling ingredient;
Though signs of contrition, for sins of commission
Are few, because not deemed expedient.

And why? There's the query! My pen would grow
[weary
Attempting to cite half their reasons;
For Truth's an exotic, where lies are despotic,
And only can bloom in her seasons.

■

Some long-bearded sages, of far distant ages,
With diligence seem to have sought her ;
And say that she dwells at the bottoms of wells,
Like mermaids, submerged in the water.

Now sceptics may question, or raise an objection,
Against what those sages have stated ;
And build their theorem on common decorum,
Whose chasteness they deem under-rated.

A mermaid ne'er dresses, but combs her long tresses
Exposed, whilst she sings like a syren ;
But "Truth," if discovered, is never uncovered,
She's masked, like the virtues of Byron.

A fable, I take it, is "Truth" talked of, naked :
Absurd ! such a thought is outrageous ;
Each lady of honour would look down upon her,
As though e'en her touch were contagious.

[features,
When mixing with creatures, she half hides her
Wears spangles, and flirts like a belle ;
But if you would find her as God has designed her,
Go seek her *far down in the well.*

" So pass we on ; I only meant
 To show the reed on which you leant,"
 Was sung by him whose ready pen
 Created Fays by lake and glen ;
 Whose wand of inspiration drew
 A magic charm round Ben-venue,
 And cast a golden gleam afar
 O'er Cambus-more and Uam Var,
 Immortalising, wide and free,
 Old Scotland's rugged scenery.
 " So pass we on ; I only meant
 To show the reed on which you leant ;"
 When deeming " Truth " could e'er be found
 Disrobed, where men and vice abound ;
 Where flits the sycophantic smile,
 And specious Falsehood reigns the while.
 If " Truth " you'd find, go search some glen
 Untrodden by the feet of men ;
 Or seek her in some lonely grot,
 Where Nature is and Art is not.
 But as for me I'll take my stand
 Within the realms of Fairyland :
 If ancient seers in fiction dwelt,
 Then who can blame the modern Celt ?

“ Come dwell with me

’Neath the greenwood tree ;”

Or, no ! let us go, where the Fairies be.

Away, then away, on our steeds of air,

With the speed of thought they’ll waft us there.

Ere the sun’s last ray o’er the valley creeps,

We’ll rest on the green hill’s side ;

Where the Child of Earth in beauty sleeps,

And the Daoine Shi’ his vigil keeps,

And the “ Men of Peace ” abide.

“ Away, then away, for the babe is thine,

And it needs a mother’s care ;

Let it once more rest on the parent breast,

And the draught of nature share ;

For thy mortal line is but half divine,

And we are the things of air.”

So spoke to a mother the Fairy guide

Who tended the babe at birth ;

And bore it away on its natal day

(For the “ good ” folk love with the young to play),

But it pined, and cried, and must soon have died,

For ’twas but a Child of Earth.

The mother was brought to the Fairies' home—
 A glittering pile with a crystal dome ;
 Pillars of silver, and floors of gold,
 And diamonds too bright for the eyes to behold.
 Gems of all kinds lay scattered there,
 Priceless and sparkling, rich and rare,
 Gendered in earth or annealed in air ;
 Flinging around them a changeful glare,
 And the least too pure for a king to wear.
 On dais of brilliants lay mother and child ;
 Around them the fairies sped ;
 And the guide that had been, was the Fairy Queen,
 In emeralds deck'd with a robe of green ;
 Her zone bore a circlet of gems, whose sheen,
 Though gay and resplendent, was still serene.
 And when she moved, or her red lips smiled,
 The steps was soft, and the curves were mild,
 For the soul of the Fairy was undefiled.
 Amid her brow. and around her head,
 The topaz gleamed, or the ruby red,
 Its crimson rays in richness spread.
 Oh, bright was that elfish hall ;
 But the Queen as she sped, with sylph-like tread,
 In glory outshone them all.

And Knights there were there, whose armour shone
As around the Queen they passed one by one ;
Equipp'd were they in the brightest steel,
With sparkling spurs at each armed heel.
Each bright cuirass was inlaid with gold,
Wrought by the hands of Elves of old.
The rivets shone with a heav'nly blue,
Carved from the sapphire of mildest hue.
The swords were all by the Genii made.
And hieroglyphics adorned each blade,
The charm to wind, or the arm to aid.
The plumes of their casques were of various dyes
But soft as the tints that adorn the skies,
When 'neath the horizon the day.king lies,
And the veil of twilight enchants the eyes.
Above them their banners emblazoned streamed,
And centred in each, pellucid gleamed
The crystal, by spirits the most esteemed.
Onwards they swept, and it almost seemed
To the mortal amid them that she but dreamed.
Martial were they, yet no sounds they made,
Though all in the trappings of war arrayed.

The Ladies were fair, as the Knights were brave !
Lovely and modest, urbane or grave.

Sportive were many—depressed were none,
But all seemed in glee as the rout begun.
Gaily they tripped, in gossamers bound—
Lightly they gambolled around and around.
Sweet as the breeze woo'd by spicy isles,
Was their breath as it wantonly fluttered thro' smiles.
Joyous those smiles as the ripples that break
In summer and eve on a sun-lighted lake.
Yet noiseless each motion, and guiltless of sound,
As midnight when fettered by silence profound—
Still gambolled they, sportively whirling around.

No longer the dancers in files remain single,
But Ladies and Knights in one body commingle.
Again o'er the pavement in silence they glide,
Heart throbbing 'gainst heart, or side pressing to side;
All heedless they seemed of their wondering guest,
Who sat, with her infant asleep at her breast;
Watching the motions of those she saw,
Partly with pleasure, but still with awe.

She gazed on herself with expanded eyes,
Fear pressing close on the heels of surprise;

Her gown of grey stuff changed to tissue of gold—
Her coif to a turban with jewels enrolled :
Her kirtle to velvet with brilliants besprent—
Gems taking the place of each well-cobbled rent
Her shoes with hobnails were for slippers exchanged,
Round the instep of which diamond clasps were arranged.
So great was the change that she could not have known
Whether feet, hands, or head, were the Fay's, or her own.

The child, too, was swaddled in linens so white,
And beamed through his sleep with such smiles of delight,
The fond mother doubted, and feared that the Elves
Had brought her to nurse one akin to themselves.
Around him a halo of innocence played,
So like to the ring in which saints are arrayed,
That nature and love to conjecture were driven,
He seemed so much less fit for earth than for heaven.

Again!—what a change!—for the first time she noted
A table arranged 'neath the dome before quoted,
To the head of which table a chairman was voted ;
(At least, she conjectured as much from the signs,
For voices she heard not). The wealth of the mines
Is piled up, they say, where the Daoine Shi' dines.

It seem'd so to her; for the choicest of wines,
Together, with every sweet, reft from the vines,
Were brimming in goblets, or piled upon plate
Of gold thrice refined, rich in carving and weight,
And every way fitting the Fairy Queen's fête.

A moment scarce past,

Ere she found herself seated

Before the repast,

And extremely well treated.

Confections of every kind roll'd in around her,
So various, that choosing alone would confound her,
There were pâtés, and truffles, and condiments rare,
And liqueurs besides—but of each she'd a share;
In fact, she was one of the jolliest there.

But strange! when she spoke,

Only echoes awoke,

And every one laughed at so charming a joke.

"Laughed"—stay, let me here that strange error recal,
They all seemed to laugh, but no one laughed at all,
For silence still reigned in that fairy-thronged hall.

She tippled the wine,

And thought it divine,

Oft wondering how people without it could dine.

But yet not a word
Had she heard at the board,
Their mouths seemed no language or voice to afford ;
And yet their lips parted,
And bright glances darted,
From eyes whose gay owners were, doubtless, light-hearted.
There, nodding around to each other, they seemed
To chat, though our wet-nurse the contrary deemed.
At first, she conceived they were dumb, and then thought
That perhaps she lost hearing since thitherward brought.
Thus musing, and wond'ring, she drooped o'er the board :
Slept soundly—and, must I confess it ?—she snored.

“ And thus, like to an angel o'er the dying,
Who die in righteousness, she leaned.” So said
Lord Byron, speaking of Haidee, when lying
Within the cave, upon his furry bed,
Don Juan slept—the sweet Ionian trying
To bring back life to one three-quarters dead.
The simile with him was sweetly sketched,
But for my snoring nurse 'twould be far-fetched.

You see I'm modest. What says our grammarian ?
That 'tis “ a quality adorns a woman,”

Or man, in Ireland born—be he sectarian,
 High-churchman, Jesuit, or Catechumen;
 An Irishman, some think, is half-barbarian.
 So let him be; but yet he's something human.
 Go search your chronicles—they should be true;
 Stands he not there, a God-made man, like you?

But truce to wild parentheses like these,
 They ill befit our Flights to Fairyland,
 Where every sentence should be penned—to please,
 And all should be—what babes might understand.

I've quoted our grammarian; and his name
 Strikes terror often into schoolboys' ears.
 Oh, Lindley Murray! have you built your fame
 On broken birches, and on urchins' tears?
 I've felt you; and, I now confess with shame,
 Abuse your rules in my maturer years.
 But hence digressions. Pass the magic doors,
 Where sleeps the infant, while its mother snores.

Betimes in the morning, whilst Sol was adorning,
 Our earth with the rays of his glory,
 We'll trace out the Fairies, note down their vagaries,
 And take up the thread of our story.

The mother still slept, and the babe closely crept,
As it woke, to the fount for its pure repast ;
She opened her eyes in the wildest surprise,
For still she was caged where we left her last.

'Twas not in that hall, where were gathered all
The Fairies I quote in my fable ;
For there, recollect, she lost all self-respect,
And snored, with her head on the table.

When awakened, she found a bed draperied round
With hangings that downward extended ;
But greater the riddle, how she in the middle
Was placed, when the supper was ended.

The walls of her chamber were hewn out of amber,
The ceiling like glass was transparent ;
Light shone through it clear from a gold chandelier,
But day was by no means apparent.

She rose up and dressed—still her robes were the
Embroidered, and gorgeously spangled, [best—
Whilst the tissues of gold, fitted just like the old
Russet gown that about her had dangled.

When fully arrayed—lo! her table was laid
 With viands no country could equal—
 (This assertion, I'm sure, cannot be premature;
 Howe'er, we'll find out by the sequel.)

Thus weeks passed away, and she sought every day
 For doors, as for plunder she panted;
 But her wish to get out, as she wandered about,
 By the Fairy Queen never was granted.

One day as she sauntered beneath the dome,
 Suckling her infant, and thinking of home,
 Filling her pockets with ingots of gold,
 Stitching up gems in each mazy fold,
 And asking herself "for how much they'd be sold?"
 She saw, in a splendid pavilion close by,
 A party of Fairies assembled.
 They danced round a cauldron suspended on high,
 Performing, in passing, some magical tie.
 She watched them in silence, yet scarcely knew why
 Her limbs 'neath her weakened and trembled.

The dance was over the charm was wound;
 No longer in circles they flitted around,

But all on their haunches sat down on the ground,
As usual wakening no earthly sound,
But acting and moving in silence profound.
Then each in the cauldron her finger inserted,
And drew forth an unction rare,
Of perfume so sweet, that the mortal asserted
She longed to have some for her hair.
Yet 'twas not their hair that those ladies fair
Anointed with what was concocted there;
But the gazer's surprise all description defies,
When she saw that each Fay rubbed it into her eyes.

A moment more, then one by one
The airy Elves passed swiftly on,
Till Knights and Ladies all were gone.
And the woman saw that their eye-balls shone
With a lustre strangely bright,
That decked each face with a charming grace,
And a sweet enchanting light.
Oh, woman! oh, woman! why can't you remain
Contented, and happy, and quiet?
Why can't you admire a rich diamond, or chain,
Or robe, without longing to buy it?

Why don't you, where feminine worth is, refrain
From seeking forthwith to decry it?
And why must my fairy-spelled heroine fain
Seek out the elf-ointment and try it?
But "why" to a woman?—the "why" is in vain,
For women will always defy it.

She touched but one eye-lid, when strange to behold,
In closing the other she found herself sold
(According to Cocker), and sadly cajoled.
No longer she moved amid jewels and gold,
But stood in a cave very musty and old.
Around her large masses of granite were rolled,
That seemed the huge roof of the cave to uphold,
From which hung down icicles spiral and cold.
Bats fitted around her, and blue-bottles bold,
And things that should ne'er in this fable be told.
Let others that like it such horrors unfold,
But here I am monarch supreme,
And I tell what was wrought in my magical mould,
Or, as Bunyan has said, "in my dream."
Her dresses were those that she always had worn,
Not tissues star-spangled, but stuffs soiled and torn;
And she looked like "the maiden all forlorn,
That kissed the cow with the crumpled horn,

That tossed the dog — ;” but I’ll cease to quote,
As every one knows what that author wrote.
Her pockets were crammed, but their burthens alone
Were made up of pebbles, and pieces of stone ;
Not jewels that glittered and gems that shone,
But here and there fragments of shells and bone.
Her head bore the coif that for matrons was meet,
And the hobnailed high-lows still were clasped round her
In fact her amazement was quite a treat. [feet ;
The dishes of gold and the goblets were shells
Wrought on, and modelled by fairy spells ;
And the draped bed was a mossy stone,
By tendrils of half-withered ivy o’ergrown.
Great was the change by that unction wrought,
And swift as the passage of light or thought.
Around her in crannies the Fays lay at rest,
Unconscious of what had been found by their guest.
Wee creatures were they, like those Gulliver found
When lying in Lilliput, pegged to the ground.

She closed up that eye, and, with proud exultation,
Perceived that the other retained “speculation.”
By that phrase “speculation” I mean—but you know
That Shakspeare himself coined that word long ago,

Where the base Thane of Cawdor caused Banquo's
 Or else, when requesting his ghost not to show [o'erthrow;
 His blood-boltered gashes ! but straightway to go,
 Unhouseled, unshriven, *sans* comment, below—
 By its "speculation" she still seemed arrayed
 In diamonds, and tissues, and golden brocade,
 But vainly she sought out the face of an Elf—
 She stood 'neath the dome, and had all to herself.

And now, gentle reader, a word in thine ear—
 Start not, I assure you you've nothing to fear;
 But as to the cave, don't you think it high time
 To leave it, whilst I make an end of my rhyme?"
 Agreed ! But where left we the woman ?—at home
 No, winking one eye, and erect 'neath the dome.

She took up her child, whilst the Faries still slept,
 And forth from their castle on tip-toe she crept,
 The eye, late annointed, revealing the way,
 And guiding her forth at the dawning of day.
 Months passed, and she found that her eye could control
 Each mortal, and read all that passed in the soul.
 It scanned every thought, and so great was its sway,
 That countryfolk deemed her a Witch or a Fay.

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One morn, as she mixed with a crowd in the street,
 She chanced with the King of those Fairies to meet;
 And straightway forgetting that he was unseen
 By eyes unanointed, asked after the Queen.

He started, and asked by what power she detected
 Invisable Fays, who such vision respected—
 'Twas something he owned that he never expected.
 She quailed. But, said he, "You need not be dejected,
 As doubtless you've been to that honour elected."
 She told him the story—he smiled as she spoke,
 Assured her, 'twas all a most excellent joke;
 Declared she had acted decidedly right,
 Then breathed in her eye, and deprived it of sight.
 She heard his loud laugh as he vanished away,
 And from that day to this never met with a Fay.

Note.—The story of the Fairies' Revel, or the Child of Earth, is founded upon one of the ancient traditions of Scotland. *Vide* "Graham's Sketches, pp. 116-118—"A woman whose new-born child had been conveyed by them into their secret abodes, was also carried thither herself, to remain, however, only till she should suckle her infant. She one day, during this period, observed the Shi'ichs busily employed in mixing various ingredients in a boiling caldron; and as soon as the composition was prepared, she remarked that they all carefully anointed their eyes with it, laying the remainder aside for future use. In a moment when they were all absent, she also attempted to anoint her eyes with the precious drug, but had time to apply it to one eye only, when the Daoine Shi' returned. But with that eye she was henceforth enabled to see everything as it really passed in their secret abodes. She saw every object, not as she hitherto had done, in deceptive splendour and elegance, but in its genuine colours and form. The gaudy ornaments of the apartment were reduced to the walls of a gloomy cavern. Soon after having discharged her office, she was dismissed to her own home. Still, however, she retained the faculty of seeing with her medicated eye everything that was done anywhere in her presence, by the deceptive art of the order. One day, amidst a throng of people, she chanced to observe the Shi'ich, or Man of Peace, in whose possession she had left her child, though to every other eye invisible. Prompted by maternal affection, she inadvertently accosted him, and began to inquire after the welfare of her child. The Man of Peace, astonished at being thus recognised by one of mortal race, demanded how she had been enabled to discover him. Awed by the terrible frown of his countenance, she acknowledged what she had done. He spat in her eye, and extinguished it for ever.

FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND.

FIFTH FLIGHT.

THE FAIRY'S WHISPER; OR, SPIRIT RAPPING.

“Some deem that the spirits of great men departed
Attend where men exercise “Will;”
But those so believing, must be simple hearted
And blind to the mountebank's skill—
For who but a fool, would desire for the rest
Reserved after death, for the souls of the Blest,
If certain, that ere his dull ashes were cold
In the vault where his kindred lay sleeping—
Or ere by his widow his virtues were told,
Or those he left orphan'd, ceased weeping;
His spirit, if summoned, must come at the call—
To Public-house parlor, or Banqueting Hall—
Of those who by dupes, are so loyally paid,
That “Giving a Sance” means “Driving a Trade.”

Thus whispered a Fairy, one night as I lay
And dreamed of a Séance I'd witness'd that day,
Where—let me confess it—I heard what in vain,
Philosophy failed by her rules to explain.
Loud rapping and tapping, above and below—
Without e'en the Raven, we're told of by Poe—
Round tables gyrating—disdaining their legs,
Or raised upon end, like a dog when he begs;
Or else, if quiescent, with sitters surrounding,
Conveying responses, by knocks quite astounding
To all save the mediums—two women who sat
Amongst us; the elder remarkably fat,
The younger less marked; each of course had her merits,
Though both spoke of "spirits," pronouncing them
[*"sperrits,"*
And answers rapped out, I felt anxious to tell them,
Were spelt, not as I, but such females might spell them.

Yet still, though collusion I failed in detecting,
I'm free to confess I could not help suspecting
A something and somewhere—but what it might be
Or *how* brought about, was a marvel to me.

"Still," whisper'd the Fay—as 'twixt waking and sleeping
I restlessly tossed—"All such pranks are in keeping

With tales that in childhood you've heard of the Elves—
Strange mischievous things, quite a race to themselves;
A species of pigmy, half goblin half sprite,
And wantonly wicked in darkness and night;
No kin to good Fairies so merry and free,
But to them opposed, as the Wasp to the Bee;
A creature all spleen, that finds pleasure in teasing,
In tickling men's nostrils and setting them sneezing;
In riding the night-mare for hours on the breast
Of him who supped late, and then hoped to have rest;
In tying the tongue up, and making it stutter,
In cheating the dairymaid out of her butter;
In drying cow's udders, in tangling fish tackling,
In frightening the geese flocks, and setting them cackling;
In sweating the steed all night long in its stable,
In crowding young mouths round a poor couple's table;
And keeping the nursery empty, where Wealth
Would give half itself for a baby and health."

I woke and looked round—then with eyes semi-closed
Slid softly to sleep, or unconsciously dozed;
But dozing or sleeping—the former it seemed,
My Fairy was with me, and spoke as I dreamed.

Oh false to Religion are those who receive
Such charlatan tricksters, and in them believe ;
Who meet, and untrammelled by rev'rence or dread,
Sit close round a table to *question the dead* ;
Laugh loudly perchance when odd answers are given,
By—do they blaspheme?—they say “Spirits from Heaven.”

I started half scared, and sat up in my bed,
For words such as those I remembered they said,
Nay more of a tapper they wanted to know
Where next to address him “above or below.”
He rapped his reply (one had asked for Le Sage)
“*En haut s'il vous plait et au troisieme Etage* ;”
I give it in French, though the taps—less polite—
Spelt out in good English, what I dare not write.

Recumbent once more, not a moment it seemed
Again stood the Fay by my side, as I dreamed.

“Poor Mortal,” she sighed, “No good Spirits were there—
A witch doubtless sat in that fat woman’s chair—
Oh ! had she but lived in the reign of King James—
Well, well, I’ll not shock you, by hinting at flames.
Let witches and wizards be legally tried,
Convicted, and set in the Stocks, side by side :

If then the same Spirits, they say they command,
Refuse to stretch forth to release them, "a hand,"
Transport them as vagrants and rogues from the Land,
And ne'er permit mountebank tricksters again
To trade on the feelings most sacred in men."

She paused, then in tones sweet and solemn she said
"Renounce all who claim to have power o'er the dead.
Man's Spirit— God breathed, is alone at the call
Of Him who takes note of the sparrows that fall.
ONE rose from the Dead—rose to save—not betray us;
The same who conversed on the way to Emmaus—
And if ye will Him as a witness believe
All else must be rogues who for lucre deceive.
"Let one from the grave 'Dives prayed' but be
To those of my kin and they'll surely repent"—
"If they will believe not the Prophets" HE said
"They'll not be persuaded by one from the dead."

When next I awoke—sleep refreshed—it was day
My Fairy had noiselessly flitted away:
Still heard I her whispers, and hearing them, deemed
That Fairy was Truth, who was near while I dreamed.

END OF FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND.

OCCASIONAL PIECES.

THE FAREWELL.

They met at twilight, in the hour
When vesper bells were ringing,
And voices reached their silent bower
Of Virgin Sisters singing ;
But she whose voice was sweetest known
Had wandered to that bower alone ;
Unmarked had left the House of Prayer,
Unseen had sought her lover there.

She came to speak a last farewell,
Ere earthly hopes forsaking—

But sad and low her whispers fell,
As though her heart were breaking.
They had not met for years before—
She never dreamed to see him more—
He heard her vows were given above,
And she, that he was false to Love.

He told a tale of hardships past,
Her love his only beacon ;
And she, of falsehood round him cast,
Her woman's faith to weaken :—
Each heard and wept the other's wrong—
The nightingale commenced her song—
The lamps of Heaven shone out o'erhead—
And yet the farewell was not said.

Nor yet—nor yet—and yet farewell ;—
When matin hymns are singing,
Loud, wild, and high the Convent bell
Its larum fierce is ringing ;
It tells in harsh discordant sound
A missing Sister is not found :
Whilst faint o'er distant hills and dells,
Come echoes of sweet marriage bells.

"HEARTS AND FLOWERS."

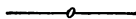


Is Love like the sunbeam
That gleams through a shower,
And kisses off gently
The dews from the flower ;
That cheers up the blossoms
And bids them be gay,
And lends them the fragrance
That perfumes the day ?
Yes ! Love is the sunbeam
That garlands the bowers,
And hearts that are freshest
Life's blossoming flow'rs.

Is Love like the zephyr
Of calm summer eves,
That whispers soft music
Through half-opened leaves ;
That steals from the flow'rets
The sweets they are given,
And bears on his pinions
Their odours to heaven ?

Yes! Love is the zephyr
Of calm sunny hours,
That wafts through the valleys
The breath of the flow'rs.

Is Love like the tempest
That wantonly shakes
The buds from the stem
That he crushes and breaks;
That frights with his terrors
The bloom from the rose,
And scatters all beauties
The gardens disclose?
No! Love is no tyrant
That frowningly lowers;
He woos like the zephyr,
Where "Hearts are the Flow'rs."



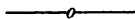
SUNLIGHT AND SHADE.



"Which would you for Friendship, my own Pretty Maid
The sunlight of noon, or the twilight of shade?"

I would," said the Maiden, "the sunlight of noon,
For in it all Nature seems glad ;
When songsters of air their sweet voices attune,
Our spirits should never be sad.
Pure Friendship, we always embrace when we may;
And seems it not purest in sunlight and day ? "

"Which would you for Love then, my own Pretty Maid,
The sunlight of noon, or the twilight of shade ? "
"I would," said the Maiden, "for Love that is pure,
The soft placid shadows of even :
Then contact is rapture !—Oh, could it endure,
To lovers our Earth would be Heaven.
Love needs not the sunlight his wooings to aid ;
His whispers sound sweetest when breathed in the shade."



"WHOM THE GODS LOVE DIE YOUNG."



Rest ! baby, rest !
Though over thy cradle the mother that bore thee
Continues by day and by night to weep o'er thee,
Repining that she was not taken before thee !
Rest ; baby, rest !

Peace! baby, peace!

Thine eyelids are closed to all sorrow for ever!
Yet could mother see thee, say would she endeavour
To call thee to life here? Ah! never! no, never!

Peace! baby, peace!

Joy! baby, joy!

The trammels of earth from thy spirit are broken,
"Of such is the kingdom of heaven," was spoken
By Christ when he bless'd a young child as a token.

Joy! baby, joy!

Smile! mother, smile!

Thy infant is freed from all sickness and sadness,
On pinions of gold through the realms of gladness
It speeds. Then to weep for its parting were madness.

Smile! mother, smile!

Hope! mother, hope!

That when thou has left us—like flowers ever vernal
Thy deeds may survive thee. Whilst praises supernal
From thee and thy baby shall laud the Eternal.

Hope! mother, hope!

Pray ! mother, pray !
That when on thy heart-strings, Death's fingers are pressing,
Thy acts like that infant's may need no confessing.
Then parting with earth, will be Heav'n's choicest blessing.
Pray ! mother, pray !

—o—

CHARITY.

—o—

SWEET !
As the breath of Heav'n
That kisses verdant meads,
When nature robes prolific earth
In Spring's green mantle,
Embroidered o'er and o'er with perfumed flowers
Of loveliest hues
Is Charity.

Pure !
As the sinless smile
Decking an infant's face ;
When pillowed on the anxious breast
Of a young mother,

It draws the sympathetic liquid forth
That cherishes,—
Is Charity.

Prized !
By the great I AM !
Above all idle forms,
Above all grievous abstinence,
Or saintlike precept.
Above all gifts which make the giver seem
As good and holy,
Is Charity.

Meek !
As the Lamb of God,
The co-eternal Son,
The Trinity in Unity,
Yet man of sorrows ;
Who laid aside his Godhead and expired
That we might live,
Is Charity.

Sins !
It will wipe away
It suffers, it endures

It knows not guile nor flattery :
To do to others
As we would wish, that they to us might do,
Yet hide the deed,
Is Charity.

Hope !
Is the handmaiden,
Religion is the friend,
The sick, the needy, and the poor,
Are the recipients,
The Omnipresent is the great first cause,
And Heav'n the home
Of Charity.

THE SUICIDE.

THE orb of day,—whose dazzling beams
Danced lightly on the rippling streams,
Which seemed in placid ease to glide,
Resistless towards the parent tide ;

Reflecting as they went their way,
Through valley lone, or meadow gay,
The banks, whose shaggy bosoms bound
Their waters to a neutral ground,
Now swathed in robes of gorgeous light,
Sinks slowly from the gazer's sight
Behind the hills, whose ruddy glow
Half disenchant the vale below
Of beauties, which a space before
In holy calm played lightly o'er
The verdant pastures far and near,
Which deck our lovely hemisphere.

Romantic child of Poesy!
That sunset was a sight for thee;
A brilliant field for Fancy's flight,
Untrammel'd through the pure twilight,
To regions where Idea reigns,
And Thought his magic court maintains.
Yes! 'twas a scene of holy calm,
And loveliness.—a soothing balm
For the sick soul, whose mental eyes
Are upward turned to Paradise.

It seemed as though that mellow light,
Fast darkening in the shades of night,
Was a reflection from the wings
Of sporting angels. Crowns of kings
Faded in the lustre of an eve
Like that; the costly jewels leave
No rays behind. But the sweet sky
Grows lovelier as the night draws nigh.
Mayhap 'tis in such tranquil hours
Pure spirits seek celestial bowers,
And as they enter bliss, we're given
A distant, transient glimpse of heaven.

But soft! As thick clouds intervene
To darken that enchanting scene;
As Night in sable mantle bound
Wraps half our slumbering world around,
A female figure seems to glide
Like disembodied ghost, beside
That peaceful rivulet, where deep
And lone the treacherous waters sleep.
And as the moon's effulgent beams
O'er her fair form in silvery streams
Are cast, she seems of fairy mould,
Or, like some fabled nymph of old;

Fair as primeval innocence
She glides along. But stern suspense,
Or burdened thought, or wild despair,
Stamps every gesture. Harrowing care
Wrinkles a forehead fair and high ;
Whilst from her large, dark, lustrous eye,
There gleams determination dire,
Reflected from a brain on fire.

Wildly to heaven her arms she flings,
Whilst from her breast—as though the strings
That bound her spirit to its clod
In sunder broke—shrieks burst, “Oh God !
It must be so, and I must pay
My hopes of heaven as price ! Away
Damned thought ! I care not ! Welcome death
Claim me, and stay this fleeting breath.
Chaotic future bears no stings
Like conscience. The ghost’s wanderings,
By Stygian ports or fiery streams,
Are superficial. Hell’s extremes
I suffer, yet cannot control
The anguish of my poor lost soul.”

She ceased—plunged in! A murky cloud
Pass'd o'er the moon, as though to shroud
Her sweet face from that deed of pain;
The cloud swept past her, and again
In loveliness her rays were cast,
Where that fair sinner wandered last.

Hark! hark! a gurgling, stifled cry
The drowner uttered, whilst on high
Her arms were thrown—"Help; help!" she cried,
And echo mock'd her, as she died.

No clouds now mask the moon's sweet face,
On yonder stream, the slightest trace
Of desperate deed has passed away.
Softly the silvery moonbeams play
O'er the deep waters, as they glide
In peace above that Suicide.

TO GENIUS.

HAIL, Genius! first-born cherub of the skies,
To thee I dedicate my simple lay;
Beneath thy cheering smile ideas rise,
To guide my footsteps through thy flowery way.

How wild thou art ! how beautiful, how gay ;
Pensive betimes,—as alabaster pale ;
Joyous anon in Humour's bright array,
When rosy Mirth unfolds some blithesome tale.
Genius, all hail !

Hail to thee ! god of heavenly Poesy,
Of restless mind, of sweet ecstatic dreams,
Vouchsafe awhile thy patronage to me,
And light my song with thy inspiring beams.
Oft in the cottage, oft by murmuring streams,
Oft in the woodland and sequestered vale,
The poet's eye beneath thy influence gleams,
Whilst magic Thought unfolds its boundless sail.
Genius all hail !

Hail to thee ! bridegroom of the dewy eve,
When Contemplation sojourns with the soul,
Aiding the pregnant fancy to conceive
Thoughts beatific,—such as heavenward roll,
Born of the earth, but spurning earth's control ;
Upwards they soar, untrammell'd as the gale,
Which wings its trackless way from pole to pole ;
Fostered by thee, and swathed in Mystery's veil.
Genius all hail !

Hail to thee ! patron of the flickering light
Which aids the student at that silent tide,
When Day sepultured yields to ebon Night
Half his domain,—when all the pomp and pride
Of busy earth with sleep lie side by side,—
When restless Vigil, with high forehead, pale,
And glazing eye, to watchful hours allied,
Pores o'er some mystic tome or ancient tale.
Genius, all hail !

Hail to thee ! lord of Science and Arts,
Of all ennobling that lifts man o'er men ;
One ray of thine Conception's power imparts,
And opes the tangled theme to mental ken,
Embodying Thought through medium of the Pen,—
Deign to my humble muse—that else must fail—
One cheering smile ; like fabled Phœnix then
O'er native dross, new fledged, 'twill proudly sail.
Genius, all hail !

WHY LIVE WE ?



WHY live we ? Say, is it to spend every hour as it passes
In seeking for pleasures, in feasting in joy and in gladness ?
In thinking on days that are past, or, in building a future
On grounds unsubstantial and frail as are sleep's airy visions ?
Why live we ? Go ask of the infant which sports in the
noontide

Beneath the broad arms of the oak, that in verdure expanding
Embraces each zephyr, and sings to it soft plaintive music ;
That infant will start at the query ; its life is a problem,
By Time to be solved in the Future—it rests in the
Present ;—

Why live we ? “To bask in the sunshine ; to play by the
streamlet ;

To cull the sweet flowers of the summer, that bloom in
the valley.”

Its soul knows no Past, for young memory only is opening
Like buds on the trees, which before they bear fruit must
have blossom'd.

It lives in the Present—its Future exceeds not the morrow
When forth it may ramble at will, and uncheck'd in its
pastime.

Why live we? Go ask of the man who in reckless
enjoyment

For novelty pants, having proved that excess is not
pleasure.

Who knows not what beauties are seen, when on high in
his splendour

The Sun lifts his head in the East from the lap of the
morning.

The portals of noon must be passed, ere he drags from
his pillow

The languor so palled which awaits upon midnight
carousals.

He looks at the Past with disgust, yet his life superficial,
Can only exist in caprice, for he lacks Resolution.

Go ask him why live we? Yet ask, when arround him
the tapers

Unsteadily flicker; as, shamed at the length of their revels,
They silently sink into darkness; not leaving behind them
Sweet perfumes to gladden the sense, but a noxious effluvia.
He dares not give answer; his life, like the fast sinking
taper,

Must fade in the flame it has cherished, it burns to con-
sume him.

And when he has passed from the earth, no remembrance
behind him

Shall call to the eyes of survivors a tear for his absence.

Why live we? Go ask of the Sage, who on Age's cold
threshold

Can look on the Past with a smile, and with hope to the
Future;

Who lived in his homestead, unknown to the wiles
of a city,

And aided the poor and the stricken, like him of Samaria.
His brow bears the stamp of experience; the white locks
that crown it,

Appear to the eyes of the thinker as signets of wisdom,
Each one a pure pledge of bright robes, undefiled in the
Future.

Time stands at his back, whilst Eternity opens before him,
And Hope points his soul to the house that contains
"many mansions."

Why live we? He tells us, for "Happiness, and a Hereafter.
This world is not ours! 'tis but for the birds of the forest,
The beasts of the field, and the creatures that dwell
in the ocean.

They spring from its womb, and returning, yield up what
it gave them.

But Man is akin to Omniscience, his soul his Creator's,
And only in matter and form is he less than the angels."

Why live we? Give heed to that sage, for his life is a
sermon.

Faith, Hope, have been his, and Charity, which is the
greatest.

She stands by the side of the angel, that mighty recorder
Who notes if the flesh when rebellious has conquered the
spirit,

And blots with her tears of sweet incense the crime from
the volume.

“Man’s life should be such, that when dying he leave those
behind him

Examples and actions which speak, when unnoted is
precept.

That as he ascends to his rest at the call “Come, ye
blessed,”

Another may teach as of yore did the Prophet Elisha,
Enrobed in the mantle let fall by Elijah the Tishbite.”



NELLY KELLY.



On a morning in May, when all Nature look'd gay,
And Earth with sweet music was ringing,
'Neath a hill's sloping brow, by the side of her cow,
Sat Nelly, the Milkmaiden, singing ;

Her dark glossy hair, o'er a brow high and fair,
Escaped from the riband that bound it;
And merry the eye, that so shy, yet so sly,
Peep'd forth from the lashes around it.
Oh! some love to hear notes that thrill on the ear,
Which Art lends her aid in adorning;
But give me the clear joyous tones of my dear
A milking her cow in the morning.

Her soft cheeks were each like a well-ripen'd peach;
Her eyes were as dark as blackberries;
Her lips—but ma'vrone—could one leave them alone,
And they red and juicy as cherries?
I stole the least taste of my arm round her waist,
She blush'd—but I cannot tell whether
She cried out "Be quiet," yet I'll not deny it,
Her lips and my own came together.
Oh! some love, &c.

The cow moved away, just as much as to say—
She'd never spoil innocent sporting,
And whisked her long tail, as we sat on the pail
She was milked in, while we were a courting.
I'm proud of that cow—and she's milked for *me* now
By the same pretty silver-tongued Nelly;

Though half of *her* name is no longer the same,
But my own—and she's called Mistress Kelly.
Oh ! some love, &c,

D E A T H.

Is that death ?
No ! for agony sports with each limb ;
The eyelids are raised, but the eyeballs are dim ;
And the breath
In a sigh seems to say,
“ Life is passing away,
From that wreck of mortality blending with clay.”
Yet life lingers,
And clings to its fortress, though crumbling with dust ;
Sweet hope has ta'en wing,
For her voice has no charm for that fate-stricken thing.
Through the strong walls of health, life's ally, has been
thrust
The conqueror's sting ;
Whilst his fingers

Press tightly and sure on the crushed yielding heart,
And force that deem groan,—ha ! his envenomed dart

Strikes the ties

That link with the body the God-breathed soul ;
It flutters—'tis freed ; and defies his control.

Through the skies

Swift it speeds, as the last links dis sever,
No more to be trammelled, for ever and ever ;
The casket that held it may mingle with dust,
But the diamond it kept for a time in its trust,

Never dies ;

And the clod,

Within which had fluttered the soul since its birth,
Now tendered meet compound of earth unto earth,

To its God

Has resigned

Humanity's essence ! the magic of mind !

The storehouse of memory ! thought unconfined !

The embryo angel that freed from its shrouds,

Wings its flight from dull hearth o'er air's vapoury clouds,

To its rest,

In that heaven of glory where pain is unknown,

To join in the chorus that swells round God's throne,

From the blest.

THE YOUNG WIDOW.



WHEN the dome of Heaven was studded
With the sentries of the night,
And the moon 'mid the glittering host walk'd forth,
In her robes of mellow light,

When the world was wrapp'd in silence,
And all eyes were sealed in sleep,
Then I rose from my lone and restless couch,
To gaze on the stars, and weep.

"Sleep on, sweet babe, for thy mother
Is drooping and sick at heart;
The ties that connected two faithful souls
By death have been torn apart.

"Thou canst not share in her sorrows,
Thy loss is unknown to thee,
For thy sire is sleeping in yon church-yard,
'Neath the drooping cypress tree."

I strove to look at the Future;
But darkness loomed between,

And Grief in her mournful sable robes,
Let the Past alone be seen.

I sobbed till my bursting bosom
Like my brain seem'd warp'd and wild,
And I turned from the sparkling face of Heaven
To weep o'er my orphan child.

Ah! when the billows of anguish
Untrammel'd around us roll,
And no dove returns with the olive branch
To comfort the drooping soul.

When no rays of Hope flit o'er us
Like angels in Jacob's dream,
Then little we reck for our shattered barques,
Uncheck'd they may brave the stream.

But whilst I wept o'er my infant,
He smiled in his sinless rest ;
Oh! he was the dove with the olive branch,
I clasped them both to my breast.

And as I through Faith looked upwards,
Grief ended where peace begun ;
So Night on his pinions of dusky clouds
Shrinks back from the rising Sun.



LAY OF THE HENPECKED HUSBAND.



When first her sweet voice on mine ear
In ecstasy burst, earth was ringing
With echoes so joyous and clear—
I thought 'twas an angel was singing :
The birds had no music for me,
I listened to tones more than human ;
So “Darling,” said I, “can it be
You're really only a woman ?”
For oh ! her tongue
With such melody rung,
I deem'd 'twas the fairies I wander'd among.

When wedded, her voice lost its tone—
That is, its sweet tone for delighting !
But ah ! when we both were alone,
And she in the humour for fighting,
I trembled—so great was its power,
So shrilly—it tore up sensation,
And wish'd I was deaf in the hour
I first heard that gem of creation.
For ah ! her tongue
So discordantly rung—
'Twas furies, not fairies, I'd wander'd among.

Then, youngsters, be wary and wise—
There's wisdom in prudently waiting ;
Don't die for a pair of black eyes,
Or a voice howso'er captivating.
Let judgment your passions assuage,
In wedlock for Love only barter ;
Or else when in banns you engage,
Like me, you may meet with a Tartar.
For e'en the tongue
From which melody sprung,
May lecture and scold quite as well as it sung.

A FRAGMENT.

—o—

The golden lustre of a summer sky,
By eve's soft zephyrs chastened and subdued,
Shed o'er the vale a mellow brilliancy—
A holy calm—inviting solitude,—
A spell o'er which nought worldly might intrude;
Glorious as that which ere man's fall was given
To gild a Paradise. The arch-fiend view'd
The sinless bower, and, as through chaos driven,
Envied our earth—it seemed so like to Heaven.

And if aught heavenly bears terrestrial mould,
'Tis scene like this ;—o'erhead a roof of gold
In azure veiled, lest man's aspiring eye
Should lose its virtue, through the brilliancy
Which angels bathe in, and which God unfurled
Like flag of glory o'er a wondering world.

The village church, half hid by stately trees,
In solemn chime gave to the evening breeze
Its bell's deep tones, which seem'd to say to man—
“ When Life commenced, the reign of Death began.”

The spire—on which the sun's resplendent rays
Were cast obliquely, towering in the blaze
Of dazzling light—look'd upward to the skies.
Pointing to man, the path to Paradise.

Beyond the church the little village rests,
Like cradled innocence, between the breasts
Of two hugh hills. One is with verdure crowned,
Whilst bleating sheep browse peacefully around
Its fertile base. The fellow-hill retains
Time's seal, and bears a fortress's remains ;
Though ages must successively have past
Since war's red standard there had braved the blast ;
So wreck'd each parapet and bastioned wall—
So grim the ruin Time had stamped on all.
One only tower remained in tottering pride,
With ivy clambering round its crumbling side,
To tell the story of the Past and say,
“ Men raised me thus ; I stand ! but where are they ?
They fell as I, and all that's earthly must—
Men are my kindred, for we both are dust.”
Towards the churchyard a traveller's steps were bent ;
Youth to his limbs unwonted vigour lent :

Health in his cheeks seemed dress'd for holiday—
Around his lips good nature loved to play.
An upright heart was mirror'd in his eyes—
His brow was such as heaven might give the wise ;
A dauntless spirit seemed to guard the whole,
And stamp one man with purity of soul.
Upon a mound, within the churchyard walls,
He sat and thought, and let wild fancy rove
In retrospect (so memory recalls
Past time when Pleasure walked abreast with Love).
Years had their tribute to dark chaos paid,
Though few those years since near that very spot
A mutual pledge of faithful love was made—
A pledge by him long cherished—ne'er forgot.
He thought on glory, and on trophies gained
In fields o'er which the demon warrior reigned—
Thought on that love, long nurtured in his breast—
A holy love, a cherished, friendly guest—
Thought on the heart that soon should leap for joy—
The maiden heart that loved him when a boy ;
Conjured a Future from the buried past,
And bless'd his God—he saw his home at last.

Amid the tombs, a candidate for Death,
An aged man had set him down for breath.

Years had made sport of him, and on his head
The frosts of fourscore winters had been shed.
He rose and tottered towards the rustic stile,
Saw the young stranger, and suppressed a smile.
“ Ah! ah!” sighed he, as he unheeded past
The youth, whose eyes were on some vision cast,
“Thou like the tenants of this lonely place
Must yet be earthed—for Death directs the chase.”
He paused, and groaned. The young man’s reverie
That moment ceased, as his dark lustrous eye
Fell on a form whose haggard aspect told
The tale that youth would tell, had youth been old.

The young man rose, and through his healthy veins
The warm blood coursed less freely; for his mind,
Awe-struck, shrank backward from the sad remains
Which harrowing care a space had left behind;
Yet seemed the totterer thoughtful and resigned,
Anticipating Death, by lingering there
’Midst the green hillocks, whilst the wooing wind
Kiss’d the fresh grass, and fann’d the hoary hair
That fringed a head which sorrow rendered bare.

The Traveller paused—the old man knew him not,
But gazed upon him as on one forgot.

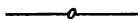
One saw what he had been in days long gone,
And one what he must be if life steals on.

He spoke and asked the aged man for those
About whose welfare petty doubts arose ;
Then blushed—the soldier blushed—as on his tongue
The name of her his soul loved picturing hung,
His foot was resting on the grassy mound,
His eyes half childishly had sought the ground,
As he inquired—though without seeming care—
“If she had grown less faithful or less fair.”
The old man’s eye with sudden lustre beamed,
Whilst o’er his face a ray of sunset streamed.
He gasped for breath, as though some secret prest
Like fearful nightmare on a dreamer’s breast !
Then changed his features to a shade of gloom
Befitting one long plighted to the tomb,
As pointing downwards, in deep tones he said—
“Thy foot, rash youth, profanes her hallowed bed.”

As loosened avalanche, from glacier freed,
Rolls to the base with overwhelming speed,
Engulfing all in one huge snowy wave,
So dropp’d the stranger on the new-made grave ;

Crush'd in that fall lay every cherish'd pride,
Each ardent hope—all, all, that moment died.
E'en recollection for a period slept,
As on the grave he laid his face and wept.

Eve passed away—the summer sun had set,
Night's spangled robe wrapped half our world around ;
Still was the grass upon the green grave wet
With tears from him whose body pres'd the ground.
The old man disappeared ; but still spell-bound
The stricken stranger linger'd in the gloom,—
The churchyard gloom, through which his groans resound ;
Fate's signet stamped despondency his doom.
For hope was sepultur'd in love's cold tomb.



THE WATERY GRAVE.



SHE stood, amid the breakers, on a rock,
Whose shaggy front, with sea-weed overgrown,
Had braved the fury of past centuries,
And raised its ponderous head in awful pride

Above the white foam, that around its base
Seem'd boiling madly in convulsive wrath.
O'er her fair form the vengeful waters cast
Thick showers of spray, and drenched the scanty robe
Which formed sole covering for the seaman's wife.

Upon her breast—whose agony alone
Bore semblance to the turmoil of the deep—
A slumbering babe, unconscious of the pangs
That raged within, with placid smile reposed.
Fiercely and loud the wild tornado raged,
Whilst closer to her breast the mother's arm .
Clasped that young likeness of her absent spouse,
And round its limbs her simple covering drew,
Heedless of self, and careful but of him.

Hark ! hark ! o'erhead, in wild commotion driven,
The surcharged clouds with rumbling sounds commence
An aerial war. The red artillery
With dazzling glare lights up the midnight scene ;
Flash after flash, in quick succession, breaks
Through the black shroud that swathes the vault of heaven ;
Then loud, deep, terrible the thunder's roar
Drowns the fierce contest 'twixt the sea and storm ;

Peal after peal in one continuous swell,
Of crash and uproar, shakes the realms of space,
As though dame Nature in her dying pangs
Battled with coming Chaos.

Old Ocean

Rides, 'midst the turmoil, on his watery car ;
High o'er each wave, defying Heaven, he's borne ;
Around his head fierce lightnings sport themselves
In wild coruscancy, showing, as 'twere,
The hoary locks that deck his briny brow.

The storm sweeps on. Old Neptune's powerful arm
Now nerveless falls—he's worsted in the strife.
Still, in the pride of baffled consequence,
His huge breast heaves ; and as the giant dies,
One mighty struggle, ere he seeks his caves,
He vainly makes. High, as in mockery,
His mountain waves rise towards the restless clouds.
A flash !—a peal, that shakes our pendant world,
Bursts fiercely forth ; and, with an angry growl,
That waste of waters hurries towards the shore ;
'Gainst the rude rocks its fury concentrates ;
But foiled e'en there in elemental war,
It breaks in spray, and to its depths recedes.

Another flash !—but fainter than before ;
And still upon the rock the seaman's wife
Maintains her footing,—still the child is clasp'd
To her rack'd breast,—and still o'er that wild sea
Her eyes with dread intensity are cast,
As though some objects paralysed their sense
Of vision, though through the dreadful darkness
That shrouded all around, no human eye
Could peer. A wail !—she starts ! a hurried crash,
Borne on the pinions of the blast, appals
Her senses. Another flash, of dazzling
Brightness, spreads o'er expanse, and scarce apart
A cable's length, she sees a labouring craft ;
High on the waves 'tis borne ; its tatter'd sails
Tell the sad tale of tornado at sea.
Beside the helm, with firm and sinewy arm,
A seaman stands, and guides the storm-lash'd bark !
On him her eyes, with magnet truth, are fixed,—
On him, the father of her slumbering child.

Upon the rock she bends her naked knees,
And breathes a prayer, not uttered, but intense.
What cry was that ? No bark before her rides !
Forth from her breast a shriek of horror breaks—
“ Help ! heavenly Powers ! my husband needs your aid ! ”

Another flash ! and towards the rocky strand
Some substance glides ; upon it her wild eyes
Rest, with a frenzy pen can never trace.
Nearer it comes—it is her husband's corse !
With fearful energy the widow's hand
Grasps at the fragment Death had left behind.
But where ! Oh where ! is Pity's angel face ?
Where Mercy's smile, to stay the stroke of Fate !
The same dark wave that bore him to her feet
O'erwhelms herself in that her hour of woe.
She clasps him—sinks—the startled infant's cries
In puny clamours pierce the midnight air ;
A moment more ! a gurgling groan is hush'd
In the loud turmoil of the hissing surge !
Husband, wife, child, alike have shared one fate,—
Their grave the Ocean, and their dirge the Storm !



MARY O'NEALE.

(A TALE OF THE FAMINE IN IRELAND.)



The night had been cold, but the morning was colder,
And dark murky clouds veiled our Isle from the sun,

The snow in its white chilling shroud had enroll'd her,
And daylight shed tears for what darkness had done.
Bleak Winter's harsh fetters had crippled creation,
The night stalking blight had destroyed vegetation,
Starvation's gaunt cheeks ghastly smiled at our nation,
And Hope from the poor Irish peasant had flown.

Within a clay cabin, unsheltered and cheerless,
Whose crumbling mud wall had been rent by the gale,
On damp rotting rushes, low moaning, but tearless,
Lay mother and infant, both haggard and pale.
The rain through the broken thatch'd roof had descended,
The walls from the fierce winds no longer defended
That shivering wretch ; but her woes were nigh ended,
For Famine had stricken poor Mary O'Neale.

Beside her, three children were helplessly crying,
Their calls to their mother were piteous for food.
Alas ! that poor mother from hunger lay dying,
And vainly to her for assistance they sued.
Her dim eye scarce saw their wan features before her,
At each piercing shriek a cold shudder pass'd o'er her,
She felt not the gnawings that inwardly tore her ;
The mother's heart bled for her young starving brood.

The infant she held to her breast breathed no longer,
Its spirit had flown from its clod to the sky ;
But the mother's hand pressed to her bosom the stronger
The cold dust remaining. Embracing they lie,
The dead and the dying. Ah ! sad that caressing,
The still throbbing heart to the stilled one was pressing,
And breathing on those she must leave, a fond blessing,
The mother's soul sought her young infant on high.



ODE TO THE OLD YEAR.

(LAST DAY.)



THOU art aged, and helpless, and weak,
Poor Old Year!

Time's furrows are deep in thy cheek,
 Poor Old Year! [day,

Harsh Winter's chill hand brought thee forth to the
Spring deck'd thy fresh youth in its bridal array,
And Summer's soft voice bade thy manhood be gay,
Poor Old Year !

Yes; then we were happy, and thou in thy prime,
 Poor Old Year!

But, ah ! we ne'er marked the swift progress of Time,
Poor Old Year !

The keen winds of Autumn beat hard on thy head,
Like leaves of the forest thy dark locks were shed,
And thine age sought on Winter's cold threshold a bed,
Poor Old Year !

Now thy old head is bald, and thine eyes are grown dim,
Poor Old Year !

Thy staff aids no longer each paralyzed limb,
Poor Old Year !

The revels of Christmas have won thy last smile,
Earth's pleasure's now fail thy lone hour's to beguile,
And thy painful respirings can last but awhile !
Poor Old Year !

How my heart bleeds to see thee, so helpless and wan
Poor Old Year !

I weep when I think on those days that are gone,
Poor Old Year !

But Death knows no pity, he rests not his wing,
He heeds not the beggar, he spares not the king,
And this midnight's dull chime must thy requiem sing,
Poor Old Year !

Ere yet thou hast left us, a moment we'll spend,
Poor Old Year !

In viewing the past from thy birth to thy end,
Poor Old Year !

Let mem'ry hold forth Banquo's mystical glass,
On which the mind's eye meets the shadows that pass ;
There we'll gaze for awhile on the phantasm mass,
Poor Old Year !

Repine not for parting with grim father Time,
Poor Old Year !
Those crowding the glass, were cut off in their prime
Poor Old Year !

These died in their childhood, and those died like thee,
This host fell by slaughter, that perished at sea,
And Death may this moment be calling e'en me,
Poor Old Year !

Thou'st seen them all living, and seen them all dead,
Poor Old Year !

Each moment the charnal-house smoothen's a bed,
Poor Old Year !

Each pulse of our heart is the funeral knell
Of some soul that's summoned to heav'n or to hell,
And this night we part too—Farewell, oh Farewell—
Poor Old Year !

PAST AND PRESENT.



In the joyous days of Childhood,
Ere a Past behind me lay,
I, like tenant of the wildwood,
All the Present charmed away.
Fancy's Future stretched before me,
And my barque sped down its stream;
Life, methought—as on it bore me—
“Is a golden fairy dream.”

Now, as Man, I pause and wonder—
When my mind recalls those years—
At the fond hopes rent asunder,
And the smiles wept out by tears.
Fancy's Future, once before me,
Long has ceased to gild the stream;
And I've proved, as on it bore me,
Life a Deed and not a Dream.



THE MOURNERS.



A RETROSPECTIVE GLANCE AT THE EXHIBITION OF 1851.

HAIL to thee, Crystal Hall, all hail!
Within thy magic pile,

I've roamed enraptured and amazed
Through transept, naive, and aisle,
Where everything wore novelty,
And every face a smile.

Beneath thy roof of sparkling glass
I've passed from place to place,
And marked the wild expressive eye
Of India's swarthy race;
Then gazed with pride upon the charms
That deck an English face.

I've stood amazed 'mid sculptured forms
That lacked but life alone :
The chisel'd marbles almost seemed
Substantial flesh and bone.
Or human beings petrified,
Their dust transformed to stone.

I've listened to the mighty swell
That from thy organs pealed ;
I've seen the weapons rudely formed
Which savage warriors wield ;
I've, wondering, viewed those brazen guns,
The thunderers of the field.

R

I've stood refreshed beside the jets
Thy perfumed fountains cast;
I've seen the wire-caged Koh-i-noor
In value deemed so vast;
And felt a thrill of awe as by
Thy Amazon I pass'd.

The lovely slave of Greece that stood
Desponding and enchained,
Called up a sigh of bitterness—
Her Greece no more remained;
For o'er its ruins Iehabod
Is writ in lines blood-stained.

The Roman father who preserved
The virtue of his child,
By offering her a sacrifice
Untouched and undefiled;
Though lifeless marble, from my eyes
A wandering tear beguiled.

All things possessed a charm for me,
From works of simplest mould
To those surprising textures wrought
In sunny climes with gold—

From petty things of meanest worth
To those of price untold.

But hast thou, gentle reader, paused
And held thy breath a space,
Beside a simple group which held
An unassuming place?
If so! warm tributary tears
Have surely decked thy face.

'Tis called "The Mourners," and the tale
Is by itself conveyed;
It casts o'er sympathetic souls
A sad yet pleasing shade,
Like that a summer twilight yields
When day's warm glories fade.

A warrior leaves his lovely bride,
His home, where comfort reigns,
And on his fiery charger speeds
To battle's loathsome plains:
Braving in Freedom's sacred cause
Captivity and chains.

With vizor down, and corslet braced
With ready lance in rest,
He charges where the foeman plant
Their bravest and their best.
They meet—a crash—he reels—he falls—
A spear has pierced his breast.

With daylight ends the doubtful fray,
And on that bloody field
A female bends o'er many a form
Whose eyes in death are sealed ;
Trembling she seeks the knight who bore
An eagle on his shield.

A cry, that scared the prowling wolf
And vulture from their prey
Burst from her breast ; beneath her feet
A mail-clad warrior lay ;
His heart for aye had ceased to beat,
And flesh had turned to clay.

Swiftly his vizor she unclosed,
Loudly she shrieked his name ;
Her bosom writhed in agony,
Her brain was all in flame.

Wildly she raved, yet could not weep,
She called—no answer came.

All that she loved on earth lay there—
She raised his heavy head :
She kiss'd his cold and clammy lips,
But ah ! the soul had fled.
A broken shield and splintered lance
Lay close beside the dead.

With noiseless step that fiery steed
Strode o'er his rider's form ;
He seemed to think on days when both
Had braved Death's deadliest storm :
O'er the young widow's cheek his breath
A space played mild and warm.

On the dead warrior's face, a tear
Startled the tearless bride ;
She had not wept, aghast she turned,
The steed was by her side :
As neighing low he seemed to say,
" Would that I too had died."

Ah ! then and there the pent-up floods
In peace no longer slept,

She clasped the noble charger's head,
Close to her cheek it crept,
And o'er the fallen warrior knight
In unison they wept.

Say, hast thou seen that touching group ?
The face of lone despair ?
The silent dead ?—the matchless beast ?
The tears those sorrowers share ?
If so ! The widow and the steed
Were not sole mourners there.



“ACUSHLA MACHREE !”



SUCCESS, charming Erin, my country, to thee !
May love and thy daughters aye smile on the free !
Thy sons, may they always in friendship agree,
For homes of true hearts, are the homesteads for me !
Thy hills and thy valleys, where oft I have roved
With Mary, when first I found out that I loved,
Still cling to remembrance, where'er I may be,
And bless thee, sweet Erin, “acushla machree !”

When musing on bright hours I've spent on thy plains,
Though sad recollection alone now remains,
I pine not in sorrow, for Hope says, "once more
Thou'lt meet with thy lass on thine own native shore,
Where triple leaved shamrocks unite all their charms,
Like Faith, Hope, and Charity, twining their arms;
Yes; there Hope has said, with my Mary I'll be,
To bless thee, sweet Erin, "acushla machree!"

How prized then the prospect; when hardships are past
I'll meet with my own lovely Mary at last;
What transports of rapture shall thrill through my frame
When she on my bosom rests,—faltering my name.
And when her pure lips to mine fondly are prest,
When heart answers heart in each high swelling breast,
When eyes read in eyes "thine alone will I be,"
I'll bless thee, sweet Erin, "acushla machree."

THE END.

BOUND BY
EDMONDS & REMNANTS
LONDON



